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DUNSTER CASTLE,
AN
HISTORICAL
ROMANCE OF THE GREAT REBELLION.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

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DUNSTER CASTLE.

CHAPTER I.

ABOUT six o'clock in the morning of a brilliant May-day, 200 years ago, a small vessel of about ten tons burthen, rigged with two large lug-sails and a jib, might have been seen leaving the little port of Minehead, on the coast of Somerset, in the Bristol Channel. The morning was so calm that the wind, which ought to have *blown* from the north-east, scarcely served to lift the boat's little pendant from the mast against which it lay. The sails flapped lazily to and fro, as she rocked on the receding tide and was slowly carried beyond the little pier by the current.

The harbour-master, who stood at the pier-head,

watching the departure of the Blossom of Mine-head, as the boat was called, placed his hands to his mouth to form a speaking trumpet, and shouted to the crew to "out sweeps and pull lustily into the main tide." No further answer was returned to him for his unasked advice, than a loud "Ay, ay, sir," which came distinctly to his ear. The oars remained beside the gunwales, and the crew seemed contented to leave their boat to the guidance of the stream. The captain, who stood at the helm, rested his back against the tiller, so as to bring her head round to the westward, filled his pipe, and lighted it with a flint, which he struck against the blade of a knife suspended round his neck by a lanyard. The crew, who consisted of another man apparently about the age of the captain, and a tall stripling, who might have seen some seventeen summers, threw themselves upon the half-deck in the fore part of the vessel, making a pillow for their heads of the warps which had been hauled in and coiled up when they left the pier-side.

"Lazy dogs, lazy dogs, I wot," said the harbour-master as if soliloquizing, "but Giles Tudball was

ever willing to take things easy, and Will Bowering and the young springald seem well enough inclined to follow his example. If the wind do not spring up, and they be too idle to use their sweeps, I doubt not but they will not have doubled the foreland ere tide be turned."

"Doubled the foreland, old boy," shouted a gruff voice so close to the harbour-master's ear, that, though he knew its owner was behind him, it made him spring up from the pier-wall on which he was resting his elbows—"Why should Giles Tudball wish the little lively Blossom of Minyead to double the foreland on a day like this?"

"The Blossom of Minyead (for so its inhabitants of those days pronounced Minehead, by corruption probably of its ancient name Mynneved,) I trow, Master Jenkins, goeth to Ly'mouth after her usual freight, and, if her owner useth no more exertion than he seems disposed to do just now, the farmers must wait long for the lime-stone that is to be burned in our kilns to manure their lands."

"'Vast there old boy, and don't try to impose

upon a simple Welshman who knows but little, yet enough to tell you that such mere cockle-shells as that yonder go not after lime-stone at all, and especially to Ly'mouth, but to Uphill, opposite the Steep Holmes, on your side of the water, or the more convenient and valuable cliffs over right us in Wales," said Master Jenkins rather indignantly.

"Said I lime-stone? Ly'mouth lime-stone, Master Jenkins, and to thee? well, well, I grow old and foolish, and you must have known that when I said lime-stone, I meant Porlock whittings which are caught with the hook, opposite the little village of Linton. They are valuable, Master Jenkins, and fetch much money of those who love delicacies. Giles Tudball, you know, doth little else but fish, though he may sometimes run over to your side of the Channel and bring back, in exchange for our broad cloths, a cargo of your woollen yarns for the clothiers of Dunster."

"Little else, indeed," said Master Jenkins, "except it be, as some folks pretend, that he lies now and then off the mouth of the Channel, near Lundy

Island, and lightens some of the ships from the Americas of a part of their cargoes, that they may float the lighter to the port of Bristol; or interchanges civilities and strong waters for English gold with the Hollanders and the Frenchmen, who regard not our customs and laws."

"All scandal, sheer scandal, Master Jenkins; besides, an he did lay in a small store of tobaccoes and strong waters for his own use, doth he not pay tonnage and poundage and his share of the ship-tax as a freeholder of Minyeard? answer me that!" said the harbour-master.

"Confound the tonnage and the poundage, and him that imposed so grievous a tax upon us!" said Master Jenkins.

"Nay, nay, speak not evil of King Charles, Master Jenkins; he must have money for his necessities; and thou know'st 'tis said the Parliament will grant him no further supplies, until he doth away with the bishops, and converts all the churches into meeting-houses."

"And let him do so, what care I? The parsons may burn their surplices, put on the black gown,

and crop their heads as closely as Master George Browne, the late clerk of Dunster hath done, provided I have not to pay on both sides of the Channel for every cargo I run out and in with," said Master Jenkins.

"Be not wroth, be not wroth; your good town of Cardiff flourisheth in despite of the King's taxes; and Master Jenkins, sole owner and captain of the good cutter the St. David, can very well afford to pay the tonnage and poundage dues at every port he puts into."

Master Jenkins seemed inclined to argue the point, but the old harbour-master stopped his angry reply and continued—

"But as touching Giles Tudball and the tobaccos and the strong waters: you know a sailor needs something to cheer him in wet and storm, stronger than Somersetshire cider or Welsh ales. If report speak not falsely, Hollands gin and the Virginian plant may be found among the stores of the St. David of Cardiff. Her captain is said to love his pipe and his glass as well as—"

"Master Luckes, the harbour-master of the

Port of Minyead ; who, folk will say, keeps not his eyes so open as they might be, if they were not filled with rheum from the smoke-reek and the fumes of strong waters. He winks, it is said, somewhat frequently at a breach of the customs' laws."

"I am not of the customs, Master Jenkins, I have nought to do with their laws. I have my duties to perform, as master of this port and collector of all her dues, and I will take care that none, not even the owner and captain of the St. David, escape by false guagings and short reckonings," replied Master Luckes in a great passion, and wending his way towards his official residence, at the foot of the pier which joins the lower town, and is situated close to the base of a high and steep hill, called Greenaleigh.

Master Jenkins smiled at the old man's wrath, but kept close to his side, throwing in a word or two as he walked along, to irritate him the more ; for it was a favourite amusement with most of the seamen who put into Minehead, to excite the old harbour-master as much as they could, in order to see how suddenly his anger could be changed to

placidity, and his forgiveness be obtained by an offer of his favourite liquor, Hollands gin, and materials for supplying his pipe.

"It is false, all false, Master Jenkins, you say it but to provoke me, but I will not be provoked: I am calm, skipper, quite calm, but may I be—"

"Hush, hush, 'vast there, Master Luckes," said the captain, holding up his hand deprecatingly.

"Nay, may I suffer more than devils are said to suffer, if I do not look *you* up sharp, your register must be set right, Master Jenkins, and your tonnage and poundage raised. I have been lenient, too lenient; but may I be—"

"Snugly seated in the little parlour of 'the Ship-aground,' with a glass of something warm, sweet, and strong before you, and a pipe of prime Virginia, such as Sir Walter Raleigh loved, and good King Jamie hated and abused, eh? that was what you would have said, was it not? and so you shall, harbour-master; I have not yet broken my fast, and the host of the Ship-aground, your worthy son, Master Richard, hath a cold chine of Porlock mutton, which will serve us both; and thou knowest that

Giles Tudball takes care that his corner cupboard lacks not the spirits or the weed. So come man, be not angry; I only joked with thee," said Master Jenkins holding out his tarry hand.

"Oh, an hast only been joking me all this time? ah! ah! well truly I thought so, and only feigned to be angry you see, so there is mine hand; and we will explore son Richard's pantry and taste what he hath in his buffet, but it is not contraband, the duties have been paid," said the old man, winking at his companion, and hurrying as fast as his old limbs would allow him towards his son's hostelry.

"'Vast mate, avast, ere we enter Master Richard's house, I would fain take another look at Giles Tudball and his craft: see, he is out in the run of the tide, and his sails catch the slight breeze that comes off down Channel. He will not be long ere he doubles Bossington Point, and runs safely into Culbone Cove."

"And why should he run into Culbone Cove of all places?" said the harbour-master, "you know that Culbone boasteth but of three little huts and

the smallest church in England, though I have heard some of our sailors, who have visited the Isle of Wight, say that they have seen one there even smaller, dedicated to St. Lawrence, but I doubt them Master Jenkins; they only say it to annoy us: why, I ask thee then, should the Blossom of Minyead make for Culbone? answer me that."

"Nay, Master Luckes, you need not be told that Kitnore church is dedicated to St. Culbone, though, who he was, it would puzzle a wiser head than mine to tell thee, and that from him the village hath its name. This day, the first of May, is the festival of St. Philip and St. James, and on it is held Kitnore or Culbone revel, under the licence of the Bachells of Ashley-Combe, who furnish the parson to the parish, and hold the manor with its rights."

"Would'st hint, Master Jenkins, that the Esquire of Ashley-Combe would license a revel, a thing forbidden by the Parliament under heavy penalties? or that Giles Tudball would risk his good name, and waste his time at unlawful junketings and ale-meetings?"

“As to the license of the good Master Bachell of Ashley-Combe, I say nought about it, but you know, harbour-master, better than I can tell you, that Giles Tudball hath stowed away beneath his half-deck sundry yards of canvass, to form a tent or drinking-booth on Culbone-green, with certain barrels of beer and cider, not to recount other articles for good cheer, out of which he expects to reap no small advantage to himself and your son Richard, who hath furnished him with the articles: neither hath he forgotten to take quoits, throwing-bars, and basket-sticks, for the recreation of such as love the sports of Englishmen, which Master Pym and his canting friends would fain put down, as wicked and abominable and savouring of prelacy and popery; though they were proclaimed to be lawful, even on the sabbath, by King James himself.”

“Times are changed, times are changed, Master Jenkins;” said the old man, shaking his head mournfully, “men talk not as they were wont to talk, but speak the language of prophets and seers; such as we used to hear only in our churches. Sacred

words be now used on most profane occasions, yet there is more roguery than ever in the world, and they that set up for the greatest share of piety are found to have the lightest weights and the shortest measures."

"I am no Papist, but boast myself to be a sound though an unworthy churchman, and yet can I not see that our revels, if they be well conducted, under the eyes of the nobles and gentry, as they have hitherto been, can be offensive either to God or man."

"Right, Master Jenkins, right, better play in sport, than do mischief in earnest. The poor man cannot always work, and, when not at work, he had better play than do worse; you know the old saying, 'idleness is the root of evil,' by which, I trow, is meant that, if a man be not at work or play, he is sure to be in mischief. I would rather that Laud, he that was Bishop of Bath, and is now of Canterbury, though he sees little of his see, seeing that he is in the Tower o' London, were left to lord it over us, than we should be as we are, in the hands of canting make-believes,

who put a stop to all our games and sports; but how know you, Master Jenkins, that Giles Tudball hath a design to go to Culbone revel?"

"Tush, man!" replied the captain of the St. David, smiling, "you are grown old and silly and suspicious withal. Was I not with thee at son Richard's last even, until the smoke and the fumes of strong waters made you talk thick, and close your eyes, and finally obliged you to be put to bed? nay, never wince man, age will creep on, and the stomach and brain will fail a man at last, though he has been an honest toper in his time."

"Say no more, say no more, I confess I was overcome, and yet I did not drink deep," said the harbour-master.

"Not so deep as you were wont of yore certainly, but still sufficiently deep for an old man, and you slept sound enough to allow every vessel in port to discharge her cargo, without paying tonnage and poundage, had their owners been so disposed," said Master Jenkins.

"Nay, even you, Welshman though you be,

would not have suffered a good-natured old man to be wronged. You would have roused me, you would have roused me, Master Jenkins."

"It might have been a difficult matter, more difficult than you are aware of; you heard us not as we carried the cargo to the Blossom of Minyead, though our barrows clattered close under your window."

"Did Giles Tudball then make known to you his intention of going to Culbone revel?"

"Ay did he, and I helped him and your son Richard to put everything on board, and am going over to join him by and by in my boat, with Alloway the butcher, and some other good wrestlers from the upper town, and am to have provender and free approach to the ale can for my trouble."

"And do you know who is gone with Giles Tudball and his mate Will Bowering? did they tell thee that?" said the old man looking earnestly in the captain's face.

"Ay man, they told me all, for they know that I may be trusted: besides, I have seen the young Hugh de Mohun before to-day, and even

carried him across to Cardiff in my vessel. He is wild, and of a roving disposition, and ought to be a sailor, for he loves the sea, and the more stormy it is, the better he loves it."

"The Mohuns once, I am told, owned Dunster Castle; is this young springald, think you, one of the family?"

"Nay, I know not; I only know that he has been for more than twelve months at Dunster, studying the humanities with good Master Snelling the curate, who hath been placed over the church in the room of Master Robert Browne, who, like his father before him, hath become an Independent and calls the Church, whose bread he ate of, Antichrist; and has otherwise offended her worthy sons."

"And he is away to the revel without good Master Snelling's consent! Well, well, I hope no harm will come of it. The Sheriff with his posse may come upon them, and then—"

"The Sheriff is the worthy Thomas Luttrell of Dunster Castle, and he is away (doubtless on purpose; for he loves not to interfere with the

people's pastimes) in his cutter for Clevedon to bring thence his fair ward. I saw him past Blue-anchor bay, and Watchet, and nearly off Brent-knoll, as I crossed from Cardiff yester-e'en."

"Well, well; I hope no harm may come on't: nay, if I could entrust my duties to another, I would take an oar in thy row-boat, and join in the revel myself. I could wrestle once Master Jenkins; ay, you may smile, but I could indeed, though not quite so well as this young springald, Hugh de Mohun, who, they say, dorsed big Alloway, the butcher three times fairly."

"I saw him do it man, and the butcher goes with me to-day, to strive to win back his laurels; but come, we are wasting the time in talking, instead of tasting Master Richard's cheer."

The harbour-master and the captain left the pier, and entered the little inn called the Ship-aground, where we must leave them for the present, and follow the Blossom of Minthead to see what befell its crew.

CHAPTER II.

GILES Tudball, who owned and commanded the small lugger, called the Blossom of Minehead, was a short, thick-set man, possessed of great bodily strength and mental courage. He was about thirty years of age, very healthy and active. He bore the character of a quiet, inoffensive man, and by some who knew him only on shore was deemed somewhat indolent and fond of ease, and was thought to prefer a seat in the alehouse, over a pipe and some strong waters, to attending to his business as a fellmonger. Giles had inherited this business from his father, and had, from his love of the sea and with a view of adding to his gains, joined to it the profession of a fisherman, and a carrier of goods to the opposite coast of Wales, whither he

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conveyed some of the cloths manufactured at Dunster, and brought back skins and hides for his own use, and woollen yarns for the use of the clothiers.

Master Jenkins's insinuations of his being engaged now and then in the contraband trade were well grounded, as Giles often ran down Channel, and returned with a great take of herrings and other fish; these, with the nets in which they were captured, concealed sundry tubs of spirits and packages of tobacco and pipes, that were considered as great luxuries in those days, and were too expensive to be procured by the lower order of the regular traders. Even the gentry were known to encourage smuggling, and to prefer the spirits and tobaccos which had not paid duty to those which added to the revenue of the kingdom.

The contraband trade was carried on without much difficulty or danger in so insignificant a place as Minehead. There was but one revenue-officer appointed to protect the port, and he was satisfied to be on good set terms with his neighbours, and to be contented with the trifling cargoes

which he was now and then permitted to seize, to make his superiors believe he was performing his duties strictly. He never wanted pipes, tobacco, or strong waters for his own use, though he never purchased them at Master Will Bowering's shop, in which his wife carried on the trade of a general dealer, while her husband went out to sea, with or without his employer, Giles Tudball. Mrs. Bowering was not offended at not having the custom-house-officer as a customer; because she thought that, in his visits to her stores, he might fancy that her goods were not purchased of the Bristol merchants, who could not afford to supply her so cheaply as her own good-man could do. Thus all parties were satisfied with the gauger, and the gauger was satisfied with all parties.

Giles Tudball moreover, kept three or four pack-horses, for the ostensible purpose of collecting and carrying home raw skins and hides, but they were frequently used for transporting inland the commodities brought up Channel in his lugger, and conveying parcels and letters for the tradesmen and gentry to their customers and friends, with whom

they would otherwise have found it difficult to communicate. On these expeditions, Giles was frequently absent, as he liked a roving life, and had perfect confidence in his active and enterprising wife, Dame Tudball, as she was called, who presided over the fellmongering business, and in his mate Will Bowering, who had too good a share in the profits of the lugger, to allow him to let her remain idle in harbour.

Will Bowering was, in personal appearance, somewhat like his employer, short and strong; but he was of a talkative and rather quarrelsome disposition, especially when the marvellous tales he told over his glass, of what he saw in his trips across and down Channel, did not meet with the ready credence he demanded for them. Had the gauger been an active officer, or the people on the quay at Minehead zealously disposed towards the government, all the secrets of the smuggling transactions of the Blossom might easily have been betrayed, as Master Will, when under the influence of the strong waters of his own importation, could not keep a secret for the life of him.

With these two men in the lugger, on the morning of May-day 1642, sailed, as we have seen, a young man about seventeen or eighteen years of age; and, as he will take a prominent part in the events which I am about to relate, it will be necessary to describe his person and character, and to give a brief sketch of the little that was known of his past history.

Hugh de Mohun was slight, tall, and well-proportioned, though somewhat longer in the arms than perfect symmetry required. His face was handsome, but had rather a foreign character about it; his eyes were very dark and fringed with long black lashes; his eyebrows were finely arched, and from above his lofty forehead a profusion of coal-black hair fell in waving masses over his ears, and nearly to his shoulders; on his upper lip he wore a slight moustache, and his chin was beginning to be covered with a dark beard. His complexion was darker than an Englishman's generally is, though a ruddy glow appeared on his cheeks through the olive-coloured skin, and saved his complexion from being termed swarthy; had he been of the other sex, he would have been termed a brunette.

He was dressed like his companions, in the costume of a common sailor, which consisted of a close-fitting vest of coarse blue Flushing cloth ; a large petticoat of the same, over loose breeches, which were buttoned at the knees, and below them a pair of stout, coarsely-made, water-tight boots ; round his waist was a broad leathern girdle, in which he carried a small pair of silver-mounted pistols, and on his head he wore a red woollen cap, which kept back his luxuriant hair from his forehead, and fell about an inch below his right ear, where it terminated in a tassel ; round his neck was suspended a small silver chain, to which was attached a small pipe of the same metal, and a sort of bodkin to clear the tube of any obstruction, and to press in the tobacco, for which purpose one end of it was flattened. Tobacco-smoking was fashionable in those days, and every man who had any pretensions to the rank of a gentleman carried with him his pipe and his silver tobacco-box as regularly as a dandy of the present day carries his gold watch and its appurtenances.

Such, in personal appearance and dress, was the young Hugh de Mohun, on the morning in ques-

tion: of his history all he himself knew was that he was born in London; that his father died while he was yet very young, and that his mother had retired into a religious house in Holland, to hide her grief for the loss of her husband, leaving her son to the care of Master Robert Snelling, who had been recently appointed to the incumbency of Dunster, in the room of Master Robert Browne; the said Master Robert Browne having been removed for preaching unorthodox doctrines. Master Snelling, doubtless, could have told Hugh de Mohun more of his history, had he chosen to do so; but he had not volunteered to do it, and Hugh had not as yet been very particular in his inquiries. With this information, therefore, scanty as it is, the reader must be satisfied for the present.

Both Hugh de Mohun and Will Bowering were sleeping soundly on the half-deck, for they were weary; the former with his run from Dunster, whence he had escaped at a very early hour, without his tutor's knowledge or consent, and the latter from having been engaged nearly all the night in carrying and stowing away the canvass for the

drinking-booth, and the barrels of beer and other articles which were intended for the bodily comfort of the revellers on Culbone Green. Giles Tudball stood at the tiller, smoking calmly and steadily, only removing his pipe to shake out the ashes of it, or to press them with his tobacco-stopper.

As the sun rose high in the heavens, the warmth of its beams awoke one of the sleepers. "What ho! Giles Tudball, I must have slept some two hours at the least, and yet we have Minehead still in view; I had thought to have lost sight of Conygar Hill ere this, and to have rounded Bossington Point and brought up at Porlock-wear, where you know I wish to be put ashore, that I may see the young Master Julian Bachell, and bring him with me to the revel."

"Why Master Hugh, thou hast slept but one short hour, and we have been drifting with the tide only. The wind cometh but in slight puffs, and that at long intervals," said Giles Tudball.

"Thou should'st have whistled to it, and would'st have done so had thy pipe allowed thee, but at this rate we shall never reach Culbone; why

not out with the sweeps, as Master Luckes proposed?"

"Time enough, young sir; I care not to reach Culbone Cove before Master Richard, who goes there by land; the captain of the St. David would have borne me company, if it had not been for you, and he would have had more patience."

"Patience, indeed! I lack not patience more than Master Jenkins, who, Welshman like, is impatient enough at times. I only wish to land at Porlock, and, when I have set foot on shore at the base of Ashley Combe, you may drift down to the Cove as slowly as you please, to give fifty Richards time to meet you at Culbone, an you list. I shall make bold to wake Master Will here, who hath had as much rest as I have had, at any rate."

"Nay, let him sleep, he has a long day's work before him," said Giles.

"His work, I trow, will rest chiefly with his mouth, Master Tudball; what with drinking, eating, and telling lies, he will have enough to employ him, and can do all that as he sits; so here goes to rouse

him. What ho! Will Bowering, rouse thee, man! The porpoises are rolling about, which thou may'st swear are so many mermen and mermaids, as thou hast often done before; wake up, man!" said Hugh de Mohun, applying his foot to the half-roused sleeper's person.

"I would have you know, young sir, that I will not put up with this rough usage," said Will, gazing savagely on his disturber, for he had not quite slept off the fumes of his last night's drinking; "I will not, by—"

"Tush man, thou art stale-drunk now, and a little exercise at the oar will work off the remainder of the Dutchman by the pores of the skin. So out with your sweep, and I will take the other, and a short half-hour shall see us round Bossington Point; thou cans't tell us some of thy veracious adventures as we pull along; they will serve us to laugh at."

"Come, rouse thee Will!" said Giles, "a little exercise will do thee no harm."

"I will obey *you*, as in duty bound, Master Giles, but I will be hanged ere I be commanded by a

runaway stripling," said Will, slowly rising and lifting his sweep over the larboard bow.

"Thou wilt as assuredly be hanged as thou wilt venture to tell lies at the gallows' foot," said Hugh, smiling as he put out the starboard oar and began pulling; "your face now looks as if it were made up for a falsehood, only you have not courage enough to utter it; what would'st say?"

"I would say that, an thou wert a man and not a mere boy, I would make thy back intimate with the end of a two-inch rope, Master Hugh."

"I knew you were meditating a lie, Will; you dare not lay a finger on me, for fear I should serve you as I did yon bragging butcher, who boasted that he would toss me into the air as easily as one of his own bulls could do it, but who bit the grass ere he had firm hold of my collar and elbow; besides Will, thy good-nature, when thou art not in thy cups, is proverbial; and you would not injure me, who, as you know, am pledged to give thee thy belly-full to-day if you wish it."

"I wonder that the parson, good Master Snelling, does not keep his pupil under lock and key,

and flog him for breaking ward, and mumming in sailor's clothes, instead of studying at home in a suit of sober student's grey," said Will, recovering his good humour, but wishing to annoy his persecutor.

"Why, as to lock and key, Master Bowering, he has strong locks and cunning too, and sleeps with the keys under his pillow, but the windows must be higher than the windows of the gateway at Dunster Castle be, if he would keep Hugh de Mohun within his walls, when he wishes to be elsewhere. I am too old for the other punishment which you have suggested, and never bore it very patiently; though a little more of it might have done me good; and as to my sailor's dress, I adopted it at your own suggestion, and gave thee the jacobuses which purchased it at Bristol; does it not become me?"

"Nay, I cannot but say that *you* become *it*, does he not, Master Giles?" said Will, now restored to good humour.

"That he does, Will, but I doubt good Master Snelling will scold Dame Tudball, for being his

wardrobe-keeper and aiding his mumming," said Giles.

"Ah, ah! truly you make me laugh; Dame Tudball *aid* me in my freaks! why man the bell of Dunster church, in which Master Luttrell hath placed the large clock, sounded twice ere I could prevail on her to let me in to change my dress. How she did lecture me from her casement! ay and threaten to lecture you too, Giles, when she got you within the four curtains of your bed, for encouraging me in idleness and disobedience. I was forced to kiss her, Giles, when she did let me in, ere I could prevail—but thou art not jealous, eh?"

"Your kisses are too freely bestowed, Master Hugh, to make me angry that one of them be bestowed on Dame Tudball, who hath always been a discreet woman, excepting in one instance."

"Indeed! and when did she prove indiscreet?" inquired Hugh, amused at the notion of Dame Tudball, who was some ten years older than her spouse and ugly withal, going astray.

"Not in a matter of love, Master Hugh, she is

not amorously bent, but she showed her weakness in going to Watchett-Point to see a merman, which Will Bowering, there, assured her, with many oaths, he himself saw combing and brushing his sea-green locks."

"Not so, not so ; I do swear by St. Philip and St. James, it was not so : that I saw the merman, I am ready to testify before the Parliament ; but Dame Tudball rode the skewball mare to Watchett, to see the tobacco-pipe of old Master Luckes the harbour-master of Minyeard, which was found in the belly of a porpoise with other curiosities," said Will.

"And what were they?" said Hugh, laughing aside at the captain.

"I cannot recollect them all just now, my master, but I know that a pewter measure and a shirt of guernsey-work belonging to young Master Richard Luckes were among the number ; and the pipe I saw with my own eyes."

"Why thou art growing worse than ever, Will!" said his master, "I have heard you tell these lies at night after your allowance of strong waters, but

never in your sober moments ; you know that the harbour-master's pipe was picked up by the tailor, as he groped for congers, in Blue-anchor bay, and that the Guernsey frock and the pewter measure were borrowed by yourself, when you went in Master Jenkins's cutter after alabaster from Watchett cliff for the masons. Master Jenkins says that his metheglin made you so uproarious, that you threw off the shirt to fight his mate, and tossed the pewter measure at his head, when he tried to prevent you making an ass of yourself."

"Well! well! be it so. I am not used to his honey-wine, and it might have overpowered me; but as to the merman, I will swear to having seen him with my own eyes, as plainly as I now see the Blue-anchor hostel at Porlock-wear," said Will.

"Was it before noon or after?" inquired Hugh de Mohun, looking as seriously as he could.

"It was at night, Master Hugh, the moon was shining as I lay at anchor in this very craft, with my lines out stem and stern, fishing for cod, or tublings, or any thing that might come to hook."

"And you saw the merman distinctly?"

“Why, he came alongside, and looked so wistfully in my face, that I was about to offer him a drink of my liquor, when he turned down and splashed me with his tail as he dived below.”

Giles Tudball and the young man here burst into a loud roar of laughter, which so offended Will, that he turned sulky and said no more until they reached the landing-place at Porlock-wear, where they put Master Hugh ashore.

CHAPTER III.

As soon as Hugh de Mobun had left the boat which put him ashore at Porlock-wear, he walked up to the little inn called the Blue Anchor, where he meditated breaking his fast.

When he entered the kitchen, he found a table spread out with cold meats and pies, salted and dried fish, and abundance of ale and cider. The host himself was presiding at the feast, which was partaken of by a motley crew, who were evidently on their way to the revel. At one end sat a group of gipsies by themselves, talking in a language peculiar to that extraordinary race of people; by their sides lay bundles of sticks, and bags containing tin boxes and other painted toys, which were, even in those days, set up to be

thrown at by the visitors at junketings and revels : at another part of the table sat a company of minstrels, having their rebecs, pipes and tabors, and other instruments for rustic music, within a convenient distance of them : a band of morris-dancers, with their little bells affixed to their knees and their wrists, sat next ; and, at the head of the table, in colloquy with the host, was seated a mediciner or quack-doctor, with his man, the Merry Andrew as he is called.

Beneath the bench on which they sat, was placed the box in which the doctor carried his panaceas, and on it rested the large tin horn, with which his servant summoned all who had ailments of of any kind to come and purchase a certain cure for them. Some half-dozen stout, sturdy men, clad in close-fitting cloth dresses, and having thick, heavy-nailed boots on their feet, and padded stockings on their legs, stood together in another part of the room, and were evidently come from the hills, to try a fall in wrestling with any one who should be bold enough to oppose them.

They eyed the youthful Hugh de Mohun as

he entered the hostelry, and a whisper passed among them that he was the stripling who had given the bullying butcher of Minyeard three fair falls, a fact which seemed to excite their wonder and their smiles.

Hugh, however, noticed them not, but, going up to the head of the table, after saluting the host and Doctor Graveboys, he seized a huge round of corned beef, helped himself liberally from the joint, and washed down the mass of solids with huge draughts from a black jack of foaming ale; after which he picked the bones of a salted herring or two, and finished his meal with some eggs, which were placed in a basin before him.

"I'faith, master mine," said the doctor's servant, in a subdued tone, but loud enough to be heard by the host and his young guest; "if all be true that you say of your wondrous powders for procuring an appetite, the young seaman there must have been a good customer and bought largely."

"His appetite, Jansen, is the result of health and exercise, and probably of a prolonged fast, which has caused the juices of the stomach to irri-

tate the *fauces*. My powders, of which you speak, are intended only for such as, having indulged in over-much eating and especially in the use of strong waters, which are poison to indolent sit-at-homes, have not energy enough to seek a renewal of their digestive powers by the free use of their limbs in the free air of heaven."

"You say right, Master Graveboys," said the host, "strong waters ought never to be resorted to but by such as have taken a chill, or would qualify themselves for exposure to the severity of the weather, or the dews of the late night or early morning."

"And for which of these dost thou apply so frequently to the little squab bottle of true Dutch build, which stands in yonder buffet, worthy host?" asked Hugh de Mohun, as he pushed the emptied jack from before him.

"I am troubled with the wind-colic at times, Master Hugh, and though I try a little ginger in my ale, it will not always remove it without some little qualification," said the host.

"Jansen," cried the doctor, "open the chest and

give me a small bottle of my elixir of life; our host shall pay himself for our meal therewith, and find much ease in his ailments without resorting to the Dutchman."

"Nay, nay, sit still man. I would rather take thy master's coins than his cordials at any time, and this morning my ale sits sufficiently easy on my stomach," said the host.

"Well, well, Jansen," said the doctor, a little disconcerted at seeing Hugh smile, "find, if thou canst, a box of my pills for refreshing the brain which has been strained by over-much study: the student of Dunster there, may perhaps like to purchase and try them when he puts off his mumming dress and applies himself to his humanities again."

"Spare yourself the trouble, man; but, if your chest possesses a philtre or love-potion, give it to the doctor that he may prevail for a kiss with the fair tapstress of the Luttrell Arms in Dunster, from whom he hath hitherto extorted nothing but sound and well-deserved boxes on the ear."

"Or rather, bring out the salve which has sovereign virtues in allaying the pains and aches which

result from heavy falls ; for the butcher will doubtless be at Culbone to redeem his lost honour as a wrestler."

"Keep thy salve for thyself, doctor, if it be good for a broken head ; for I think it not impossible that your impertinent tongue may earn you a cracked crown ere the day be past," said Hugh smiling good-naturedly.

"Not from you, young sir, you are too much of a man to lay hands upon the old and peaceable, and I trust, if the butcher of Minyeard comes to try a fall, you will serve him as you did before, and as he richly deserves to be served, who bullies and crows over those whose strength is not a match for his."

"I would gladly see him grassed," said Jansen, "for he is a braggart, and abuseth his bulky strength."

"And so you shall, Jansen, if my eye and foot fail me not, and he provokes me to the contest. I have no quarrel with the man, but I shall not decline a fall with him if he seek it," said Hugh.

"It were well," whispered the host, "you had

your friends by you to see fair play. The men from the hills will be there, and they love not to see one of their company foiled by a stripling, and he of gentle blood."

"Tush, man, never fear for me; Englishmen will see fair play, and if for once they act unfairly, know that Giles Tudball and Will Bowering, with Master Jenkins and the host of the Ship-aground, will be there to stand by me, even should young Julian Bachell refuse to give me his company to the Green."

"He will not refuse you, sir, if he can manage to get away with you, he loves sport too well; but his father, who is a justice of the peace, would not that his son should be seen aiding in games which Pym and the Parliament have declared unlawful."

"The crop-eared knaves will not induce the owner of Ashley Combe to interfere and prevent our innocent games," said Hugh.

"I said not that he would interfere," said the host; "but he would rather that his son should not join in them."

"Well, having paid my reckoning, and thanked you for your hospitality and good cheer, and the mediciner there for his offer of pills and ointments, I will away to Master Julian and learn his intentions," said Hugh, throwing the price of his breakfast on the table, and preparing to leave the room.

"Should occasion call for them, command my services, young sir, and those of my servant Jansen," said the doctor with a meaning look.

Hugh smiled as he bade adieu to him, and, passing through the back of the house, sprung up the steep ascent which led through the garden of the inn to the road from Porlock to Ashley Combe.

The Lodge in which Master Bachell, the Lord of the Manor, dwelt, was perched, as it were, in a small recess in the mighty cliffs which overhang the Channel above Porlock-wear. The ascent to it was very steep, and it was in those days only accessible to horsemen and persons on foot. The road was very narrow, and composed of loose, large stones, the *débris* of the red sand-stone rocks of which the cliff is composed. It was overhung by the branches of the dwarf oaks and ashes, with

which the surface of these hills is clothed, and which afforded a safe and much sought shelter to the red deer with which the country abounded.

The house was built of the red rock, and from the Channel appeared to be a part of the cliff itself. It was not discernible from the road until you stood in front of it, at the gate of the lodge which admitted you into its grounds.

Up this steep and broken road Hugh de Mohun sprung as lightly and as actively as one of the red deer, the denizens of the neighbouring woods, would have done. He paused not to gaze at the splendid prospect which, at intervals, might be gained through openings in the coppices, but hurried on, as if business and not pleasure urged him. Just as he reached the path which turned out of the main track, the bridle-road from Porlock to Culbone, he overtook Master Richard Luckes, the host of the Ship Aground on Minehead quay, who was riding on a stout galloway, with his wife seated on a pillion behind him.

Hugh exchanged salutations with them, and was about to leave them to pursue their way, when

Master Richard told him to keep his wind, and not to over-exert himself, for that he had seen Allo-way, the big butcher, push off in Master Jenkins's boat, and had heard him say that the parson's runaway pupil should rue the day when he dorsed, by accident, the best wrestler below the hills.

Hugh smiled, nodded his head confidently, and told Master Richard that he was not frightened at the bully's threats. They then parted, and the young man entered the gate-lodge of Ashley Combe, and bade the gate-keeper seek Master Julian Bachell and tell him that he wished to speak with him.

"Why not walk up to the house, sir?" said the porter; "you will find both my old master and the young squire within."

"I would speak to Master Julian alone," said Hugh, "and care not that his father should know of my being here; you understand me?"

"Ay—ay, I can easily believe that, Master Hugh de Mohun having doffed his student's grey, and donned a mummer's dress, would fain entice his friend, Julian Bachell, unbeknown to his father, to the revels at Culbone."

"You are not far wrong, old man, and as you are no spoil-sport, and would not betray your young master, seek him to do my errand," said Hugh, placing a piece of silver in the porter's hand to quicken his movements.

Hugh waited, and not very patiently it must be owned, for some quarter of an hour ere his messenger returned, to say that Master Julian would be with him as soon as he could leave the library without exciting his father's suspicions.

"I had great difficulty in getting your message delivered, young sir, for Master Julian was closeted with his father, reading to him the letters which came down from London this morning. I was forced to send in Hodge, the keeper, to say that one of the blood-hound pups was, he thought, down in the distemper. I knew that wou'd bring him out if anything would, for he loves his dogs, and would grieve sorely to lose one of his favourite breed. He readily forgave my deceiving of him, as you may believe, when he heard that the pup was well, and that you were wishing to see him ; he will be here anon."

Hugh passed the time in talking to the old man about the hounds and red deer, and the woodcocks and wild-fowl that he had killed in his younger days, until Julian made his appearance. The young men shook hands heartily, and expressed their joy at seeing each other.

Julian Bachell was about a year older than Hugh de Mohun. He was nearly as tall but much stouter; and, though such was not the case, appeared to be a far more powerful man. His face was very fair, and his hair and eyes light; his countenance wore a bright and cheerful look, although there was a something about the short upper lip, and the lines about the mouth, that indicated pride, and perhaps a hasty temper. He was dressed plainly in a suit of claret-coloured cloth, and wore on his head a low-crowned broad-brimmed hat, with a drooping feather in it, and had a light rapier by his side. His right hand held a small riding-wand, and on his left arm rested a beautiful small black and tanned spaniel, whose curly ears quite covered its tiny face, and hung some inch or two below its mouth.

"Why, how now!" said Master Julian, as he dropped the riding-wand to enable him to grasp Hugh's extended hand. "What brings Master Snelling's hopeful pupil to Ashley Combe this morning, mummied out in a suit of Giles Tudball's ordering, doubtless? though, faith, it becomes him well."

"Nay, no flattery, you know I am fond of the sea, and Will Bowering prevailed on me to let him buy me this dress in Bristol, lest, as he said, the tar should adhere to my sober grey and betray me by its odour to the good parson, who fondly believes that I am sleeping or studying over the gateway of Dunster Castle, when I am whistling for the wind in mid-channel, and taking a midnight trip to the opposite coast."

"And you have walked over some ten miles from Dunster just to show me how well the suit becomes you."

"Not so, Julian; I sailed, or rather pulled in Giles Tudball's lugger from Minehead quay to Porlock-wear this morning, and I am here, after having done justice to mine host's beef at the Blue

Anchor below, to ask you to join me in a walk to Culbone to see the revels."

"The revels, man! art mad? do not you know that they are forbidden to be held, under pain of the displeasure of the puritan Parliament?"

"I do know it; but I do not think that any one of the Parliament will be likely to hear of a revel being held in so retired a spot as Culbone is."

"Why, man, smell I not of parchment? I was reading over a most stringent document, sent down by Master Speaker to my father as a justice of the peace, warning him to put a stop to this same Culbone revel, when your messenger called me from the library with his tale of a distempered puppy."

"There must be spies about, Julian, or so contemptible a business as a revel at Culbone would never have reached the Speaker's ears; but what will Master Bachell do? he will not prevent our old English sports and pastimes."

"My father, Julian, has business which obliges him to ride in a contrary direction from

Culbone to-day, and he knows not, of his own knowledge, that a revel is to be held."

"Good!" said Hugh smiling, "I knew that so loyal a subject as Master Bachell would not obey the orders of a set of canting knaves, who would oppress the whole nation, and deprive them of their rights and privileges, just as they are trying to deprive their lawful sovereign of his prerogatives."

"Hugh de Mohun, you are right, and were it not that I might subject my father to inconvenience and perhaps to danger, for the Puritans love to catch a gentleman and trounce him if they can, I would even join thee in this revelling; but, as it is, I would rather dissuade you from going."

"Julian, I have pledged my word."

"Pledged your word? to whom?"

"You will smile, when I name Alloway, the butcher, of Minehead."

"He whom you threw so fairly three falls?"

"The same," said Hugh, "he lays it to accident, and is gone in Master Jenkins' boat to give me the meeting on Culbone green."

"Nay then, for the honour of Dunster, you must indulge him; and. as it may be dangerous to go alone, for the wrestlers hang together like freemasons, I will go with you," said Julian Bachell.

"For that matter, I am not badly supported; I have Giles Tudball and his mate, Master Jenkins, and the host of the Ship-aground of Mine-head quay: moreover I have promise of aid from the strange old mediciner—"

"Mean you Graveboys, who writes himself M. D. though he hath not a diploma even from the northern colleges?"

"Even so; and his man Jansen."

"Then trust me you might have worse allies, for the doctor is doubtless a descendant of Dr. Faustus, and knows more, though not *in arte mendendi*, than people give him credit for; but I will put on a mumming dress to join thee."

"Not to the injury of your father," said Hugh.

"I will so alter my personal appearance, that not even he who begat me should know me."

Thus saying, Julian left the gate-house, and

returned in about ten minutes, dressed in the livery of one of the keepers of Exmoor forest ; by the aid of a wig and corked eyebrows, moustache, an imperial, and a large broad-flapped deer-skin cap, the disguise seemed to Hugh to be perfect.

CHAPTER IV.

THE little village of Culbone lies about two short miles from Ashley Combe Lodge. The road to it is made through the thick plantations of stunted oak and dwarf ash, which cover the lofty hills rising immediately above the Channel. It is very narrow and steep, and passable only by horsemen or persons on foot, and requires a firm step and keen eye to enable horse or man to keep on his legs ; for the large unshapely fragments of rock, of which it is fashioned, are loosened and rolled down in wild disorder by the heavy storms, which are attracted by the woods and lofty mountains skirting this side of the Bristol Channel.

Hugh de Mohun and Julian Bachell climber

the first ascent in silence, for there was not room for them to walk abreast, and it was no easy matter to find breath for discourse, when the lungs were in full play, from the exertion required in mastering the difficulties of a path, which was nearly as steep as the roof of a house, and formed of loose and slippery materials.

When they gained the top of the first steep, they paused to take breath, and to view the extensive and interesting prospect, which an opening in the woods through a deep combe afforded them.

Immediately in front of them was the mouth of the Bristol Channel, with its bold, majestic foreland, behind which lay Linton and Ly'mouth, and opposite to which in mid-channel is Lundy Island. To the right lay the coast of South Wales, studded with towns and churches, and having for its background a long and high ridge of mountains; still more to the right and almost behind the gazers, lay the bold headland called Bossington-Point, and in the bay which it forms lay snugly ensconced the little town of Porlock, with its quaint church-steeple, and about a mile nearer to them

the hamlet of Porlock-wear which boasts of one public and three private houses occupied by fishermen, whose boats might be seen lying in a little basin, which is filled at high tides, and is called the wear. Immediately below their feet, on the side of the steep hill which they had climbed, was Ashley Combe Lodge, amid a mass of wood which fringed the very borders of the Channel.

It was as brilliant a May-day as ever shone from the heavens, and, as the coast of Somersetshire is warm and genial, and favourable to vegetation—for there the myrtle and other tender plants flourish through the winter—the trees had put on their new livery of brightest green, and the birds, with which the woods were filled, cheered their mates as they brooded on their eggs with every variety of song, in which the nightingale's note was predominant. A few fleecy clouds floated beneath the blue sky, and seemed to be reflections of the white canvass sails of the vessels, which dotted here and there the surface of the sparkling sea.

“On my word Master Hugh,” said Julian, after

a prolonged silence, and with brightening eye, "it were worth more than a pair of exhausted lungs and strained knees to gain such a glorious sight as this. North Devon may boast of its rocks, and caverns, and iron-bound coast, but give me my much-loved Somersetshire, with its well-clad mountains and leafy combes, down which the brook dashes and splashes, in haste to contribute its support to the fulness of our glorious Channel. Even our very Tors, covered only with scanty heath, the brown fern, and the yellow furze, have charms for me. With my dog and my fowling gun, and my horses and trusty deer-hounds, I could live here all my days without a sigh, and leave the troubles and turmoils of towns and cities to those who love them."

"It is a glorious sight, this coast, Julian," replied his companion, "especially when beheld from the sea and by the light of a brilliant moon: I have spent hours in gazing upon it, yet, I have often thought that I would rather steer some goodly bark out into broad ocean yonder, and visit other lands, in search of fame and wild adventures, than settle calmly down as a country gentleman, whose only

excitement is the chase—even in so lovely a spot as this. I would herd with men who war with their fellows, and not with beasts and birds, Julian, and I would e'en consent to dwell in some crowded city, provided I might mingle with the great and the brave, and share their councils and emulate their deeds."

"Nay, speak not contemptuously of the chase, which our greatest and our bravest love, because it is a mimic warfare, and calls for plots and stratagems, deep designs, and boldly executed deeds, to ensure success in it. It is no place for the coward, Hugh; the slinking hound, the low-bred, timid horse, and the fearful rider, are best away from it. Give me a noble steed and my stanch hounds; let me hear their cheerful notes mingling with the joyous blasts of the horn, as we fly over our hills and dales, and dash through woods and over brooks in our course, until, when horses, hounds, and men are nearly exhausted from exertion and excitement, the quarry is in view, and we rush gloriously in and kill—"

"A timid deer!" said Hugh, looking down upon

the ground, as if he saw the panting beast before him, and grieved, like the melancholy Jacques, for the death of so noble an animal.

"A timid deer! no man, a mighty stag, with antlered head, who stands at bay and—"

"Gores the noble hounds, until some hunter, bolder than the rest, hamstring the beast, and all around enjoy the sight of the tears trickling from its lustrous eyes, as the dogs tear it to the ground. A rush of the huntsmen and a knife drawn across its dappled throat and all is over."

"Not so, Master Hugh," said Julian dropping his excited tone and smiling, "what think you of the noble haunch, the savoury pasty and the tale of dangers encountered and overcome, recited over the purple wine-cup?"

"I think that some, but not such as you, Julian, love that part of the chase best. You know I am never backward to join your hunt, and am no laggard in the pursuit; but I would fly at higher game: were I a hawk or a falcon now, I would seek my native rocks and woods, and quit a master who would fly me at the timid partridge or sluggish

wild-duck when my proper quarry is the courageous heron with its spear-like bill, upon which I would rather be impaled than let my noble nature be debased. But let us on; see yonder, in the sheltered cove of Culbone lies the crewless lugger of Giles Tudball; and, as I live, below us, gliding stealthily beneath the trees that fringe the shore, is the boat of Master Jenkins, which bears mine adversary to the fray. So, on Julian, we must be there to give them the meeting, and a race up these steepes will give me a breathing, that will prepare my lungs and limbs for the struggle."

Thus saying, Hugh de Mohun led the way up the tortuous path, at a speed which prevented any further converse, until they reached the summit of the hill and saw below them the miniature church of Culbone and its three little white cottages on the Green, which was studded here and there with groups of people and canvass tents and booths.

A few minutes brought them down the rapid descent to the brook, which boiled and fumed as it struggled over its stony bed from the hill above, and hastened to close its short career in the sea,

which indented the coast below with its salt waves, as if eager to meet and welcome the fine, fresh draught supplied by the Dryades of the Porlock hills from their caves and retreats. Before they crossed the brook, by means of the large fragments of rock, which were placed at certain intervals in its bed to insure dry feet to pedestrians, Julian begged his friend to consider that he wished not to be known, and, for the better concealment of his real character, should prefer quitting his side, unless any particular occurrence should render it necessary for him to join him, and that he would then do so as a serving-man and not as an equal.

Hugh, who was anxious to prevent any unpleasant consequences resulting to his friend from his compliance with his whims, readily yielded his consent, and, leaving him behind, crossed the brook, and quickly ensconced himself in the booth erected by Master Luckes for the entertainment of his customers. Hugh found Giles Tudball and Master Will Bowering, seated within, on a plank which rested on two barrels into which spigots had been inserted, ready for those whose exertions should cause

them to need either stimulants or refreshments. Master Tudball was quietly smoking his interminable pipe, and his mate was following so laudable an example, only removing it now and then, to tell some miraculous tale to Mistress Luckes, who presided at a sort of temporary counter, whence she supplied strong waters to those who preferred them to ale and cider. A table, formed of the breasting or bottom boards of the lugger, was covered with a good store of solid food, and was put under the care and superintendence of Master Jenkins, who acted as carver, to relieve the host, whose duties were confined to the ale-can and the cider-cup.

Master Richard, the host, was the first to salute Hugh de Mohun, and to ask him if he would eat of what was set out, or drink a draught from his barrels, to quench his thirst after his walk over the bill. This he declined, but, the hostess pressing him to become her customer, he took a small quantity of spirit and mixed it in a cup with some water, and then seated himself by Giles Tudball, and filled and lighted his pipe. There were no strangers in the booth, for the company had not yet

arrived in great numbers, and the few that had arrived were employed in tethering and foddering the sumpter horses and forest ponies, on which they had travelled, in the wood adjoining. Hugh, knowing that he could trust his hearers with the secret without fear of its betrayal, told them briefly that Master Julian Bachell had accompanied him to the revel, disguised as a forester, and did not wish to be known, lest it might involve his father in difficulties, as he had had notice from Master Pym and the Parliament to prevent the revels taking place. All agreed, therefore, not to appear to know him when he came amongst them during the festivities of the day.

"But where," asked Hugh of the captain of the St. David, "is my redoubtable foe, the burly butcher of Minyeard?"

"He is above there, master mine, in the tent of the hill-wrestlers, arranging the play for the day, and is not in the best of humours, from having been teased and bantered on his former defeat, by Master Richard's father, the harbour-master, before we left the quay; thou must be alive,

young sir, or he will make thy bones sore if he catches thee at a disadvantage."

Hugh only smiled in reply to this advice, and sat smoking his pipe, and conversing at intervals in a whisper with Giles Tudball, and laughing at the lies told to the incredulous hostess by the mate of the lugger.

Julian Bachell, in the mean while crossed the brook, and strolled towards the groups on the green ; there he found the gipsies preparing for the amusement of their expected customers, by making circular holes in the ground and driving their stakes into the centre of them. The minstrels had formed a sort of temporary theatre under a large oak, by suspending coloured canvass hangings from the lower branches, having taken care to secure a smooth surface within a few yards of them, whereon the lads and lasses, who were so disposed, might figure in the mazy dance to the sound of their music. Beyond them again were the morris-dancers, seated round a pannier, which contained the handkerchiefs, sticks, and the fool's baton and bladder, and other auxiliaries of their

simple art. The wrestlers were, as Master Jenkins had said, in a tent by themselves, arranging the sports of the day, in which they were to take a prominent part.

Julian looked in upon them as he passed by, but was bidden by Master Alloway to "look after his own concerns and not to trouble himself with what did not belong to him." At any other time the butcher would have been greeted on the head with a blow of the stout ashen beating-pole, which the seeming forester carried in his hand, in return for his insolence; but he was suffered to go unpunished for reasons which may be easily divined.

Julian turned away towards the platform, which was a sort of turf mound, raised about three feet above the level ground, in order that all the spectators might see the wrestling and the back-sword playing to advantage. In the centre of the green was erected the May-pole, of tall, smooth, polished wood, tapering away to a fine point, to which was suspended by gay-colored ribbons a huge leg of mutton; he who could reach it and take it down was to have it for his pains. At its

foot were placed some half dozen sacks, in which a race was to be run round the green, and a large hand-bell for the sport called jingling.

Without the green, and under the shadow of a large tree, was a small table, converted into a stage, on which Dr. Graveboys had taken his station, ready to sell his nostrums when his easily-deluded customers should arrive ; and by his side stood Master Jansen, trumpet in hand, with the box of medicines suspended in front of him by a broad strap which passed over his shoulders.

The doctor, as Julian passed, looked earnestly at him, and then, throwing his eyes round him to see that his movements were not observed, made a slight bow of recognition, which the young man did not acknowledge, but passed on under the shade of the trees, where the horses of those who had reached Culbone were tethered, to a retired spot, where he threw himself on the ground to watch the proceedings of the rustics, who were now beginning to assemble from all quarters, but more especially from the road by which he had himself travelled, and from another formed along

the side of the brook which descended from the hill above.

Among these, especially the latter, who had evidently gone by a round-about way to avoid notice, he observed many of his father's tenants, farm-servants, and forest-keepers. Those, who came by the more frequented track, principally consisted of tradesmen and fishermen from Minehead, Alcombe, Dunster, and Porlock. To see if his disguise were perfect, Julian boldly sauntered among the people from Ashley Combe and Porlock.

Although they stared hard at him as he passed, he was convinced that he was unknown and unsuspected by all but one, and that a young girl, the daughter of the gate-keeper, who had doubtless been apprised of his going by her father, and bidden not to betray his secret or to notice him. She accordingly dropped her eyes when she saw him gaze at her, and betrayed only by a blush her recognition of her young master.

Satisfied with the result of this experiment, Julian left his lurking-place under the trees, and boldly crossed the green, which was now more thickly

studded with merry faces and stalwart limbs than when he crossed it before, and entered the booth of Master Richard Luckes. No notice was taken of his entrance by any one, and, after he had accepted an offer of a pipe and some cider from the host, who treated him as a common customer, he seated himself near to Hugh de Mohun and Giles Tudball.

He had not been long seated ere Master Jansen entered the booth, and, passing by the host, declined his offer of "Drink friend, drink! barley-juice or the real golden-pippin cider," walked straight up to the hostess and, assuring her that he was ill and that the doctor's nostrums were not to his taste, for he knew their component parts, begged to be indulged with a glass of her Dutch fire-water.

While she turned her back to him to supply his wants, he slipped a piece of paper into Julian's hand, and, having drunk and paid for his cordial, vanished, assuring the company that "his plan had been succesful, and that he felt very much relieved."

Julian cautiously opened and read the paper thus cautiously given to him. Its contents were these—"I have just heard that the revel will be interrupted ; but do all you can, with your friends, to induce the people to disperse quietly: above all things, do not *you* be seen or known ; and it were well that G. T. have his lugger ready to convey H. D. M. off at a moment's notice."

A. G.

Julian, who did not doubt that Aaron Graveboys wrote the scroll, shewed it to Hugh and to Giles, who, although they could not comprehend the meaning of the writer, resolved to prepare to obey his orders.

CHAPTER V.

WE must enter the tent erected for the wrestlers, and see what is going on within its canvass walls.

Alloway, whose name has been so often mentioned as the burly butcher who had been fairly thrown three times by Hugh de Mohun, was sitting on the ground apart from the rest. He had been laughed at and taunted by so many about his defeat, that he was in a very bad humour, nor could the pipe and stout ale, with which he was endeavouring to console himself and to strengthen his nerves for the anticipated play, dispel the malignant feelings which he entertained towards his youthful adversary. He felt very spite-

ful towards everybody, and resolved to concentrate his venom and spit it out on him who was the cause of all his vexations.

"Well butcher," said one of the wrestlers, turning from his companions towards Alloway, "as the struggle between you and the stripling will be severe, we have agreed that you shall not waste your strength by joining in the general play, but reserve yourself for a single bout which, as the most interesting, shall come off last."

"By knife and cleaver, I swear, I will not be thwarted thus," said Alloway. "I came here to take my part in the trials of strength, and I will not be put off. The man who can fell an ox, even one of the large Devon breed, by a single blow of his arm, and carry the carcass, at twice, upon his shoulders from the slaughter-house to the market shambles, is not to be cheated of his honours in the ring, because he has to try a fall with a mere youth—"

"Who hath had the best in three fair bouts," said the wrestler.

"By accident—by accident—I swear by knife

and cleaver—a good butcher's bath—it was a mere accident."

"Ay, accidents will happen, is an old saying, and they may happen again, Master Alloway, so reserve thyself for the struggle on which will depend the honour of the wrestlers of Minyeard. If thou art defeated, thy townsmen will not be thought worthy to meet the hill-men on fair terms; we must *give* thee a fall or two to put you on an equality with us in future, as the swift runner gives his slower adversary a few yards in the start."

"Fear not for me, I will throw the herring-gutted boy, or I will die in the ring; but I will not be put aside like a weak bow, which is only stretched the moment the arrow is to be placed on the string, for fear it should lose its spring. I will try a fall in my turn, by G—d!"

"It cannot be; we have arranged the play without you, three against three; but if you throw the stripling, and your mind be then unchanged, you shall take up the conqueror, and so win the prize from all of us, if you can."

To this proposition, Alloway, after holding out a long time, at last consented. He left the tent, with his pipe in his mouth and his black jack of ale in his hand, and was followed by the others to the platform, where the single-stick players had already taken their station, to commence the sports of the day

Master Richard Luckes, who presided over the play, called the combatants by name, beginning with the less skilful, who quickly drew blood from each others' crowns, amid the shouts of the bystanders, and gave place to others more skilful in the use of the basket-stick.

After an hour's play, which was pronounced most excellent by the best judges, the platform was left in possession of an old man, who had had one of his eyes knocked out, in a severe struggle which he continued after he had removed the eye and found that "there was no blood."

This man was the champion of the country round, and no one cared to oppose him, so that he was putting on his upper coat, preparing to leave

the platform and claim the prize, when Master Richard Luckes bade him wait while he summoned the company three times, to see if none could be found to try another bout with him.

To the first summons, uttered in a clear loud voice no one responded.

"It is of no use," said one of the beaten players wiping the blood from his forehead, "his weapon flies quicker than the eye can follow it, and before you can stop it—crack! your eyes flash lightning and your crown is broken."

"You may as well strike at a will o'the wisp," said another. "He was here before you, and when the blow descends, hey presto! he is there behind you—the devil aids him I think."

"Devil me no devil," said Giles Tudball; "if I did not despise the childish play, I would try a bout with him myself for the honour of Minyeard. Can no one be found to risk a cracked crown?"

A dead silence followed, and the old man chuckled and looked round triumphantly.

The summons was uttered for the second time,

but produced nothing but a low murmur from the spectators.

"For the third and last time," said Richard Luckes, "I pronounce the stage in possession of old Master Castle, the sheep-drover of Berkshire, and the prize to be his, if no one will come forward for the honour of Somerset."

"Stand aside there," called out Will Bowering. "Make way, make way," shouted the crowd, closing together instead of falling back, that they might get a sight of the individual who was rash enough to try conclusions with the veteran. Aided by Giles Tudball and some dozen more, two young men, the one dressed as a forest-keeper and the other as a sailor, forced their way through the crowd to the side of the turf-stage. The former took his station at the side, and the latter sprang lightly upon the platform and took a basket stick from Master Richard Luckes.

"It is the student of Dunster," shouted those who knew Hugh de Mohun.

"Ay, and if Master parson Snelling have driven learning into his head, the Berkshire sheep-drover

will not be long in making a hole whence it may ooze out again with his hot blood," said Master Alloway.

"And all the better for you, butcher," said one of the wrestlers, "he will be the better qualified to try a fall with you, when his strength is a little reduced."

"In the name of Heaven," said the fair hostess, Mistress Luckes, "the young wildgoose is not going to risk his handsome head in a struggle with a man who has cracked as many human crowns as he has paid crowns of silver for Porlock sheep!"

"That will he," replied Master Jenkins, "he hath but little regard for life or limb when honour is at stake."

"Then I will e'en seek Master Graveboys and bid him spread a plaister, while I prepare my scissors to cut off some of those flowing locks, from which he has withdrawn his woollen cap to make his fate the surer," said Mrs. Luckes.

As she said, Hugh de Mohun, after selecting a weapon, and shaking the hand of his adversary to prove that no malice existed between them, threw

off his cap according to the rules of the game. His long dark hair, which had been partially confined by it, fell down over his ears and nearly rested on his shoulders.

"Keep a ready hand, a quick eye, and an active foot, Hugh, or the old man will be too much for you," said Giles Tudball.

Hugh smiled and took his ground. His right foot was slightly advanced, and his stick held in such a manner as to be ready to protect his head or to assail his adversary.

A long pause took place, amidst a breathless silence; both stood on the defensive and seemed unwilling to give the first blow: at length, Hugh dropped his stick a little, and, quick as lightning, the old man, seeing what he thought an opening, struck at his head. Hugh sprung back, the turf received the blow, and, before the old man could recover his guard, Hugh, instead of striking St. George, as the blow at the head is termed, gave point as if his stick had been a rapier. The old man staggered and fell on his back. Master Richard stooped over him, and found that his scalp had been abraded

for about three inches, and that the blood was running from the wound in a decided stream.

A loud shout rent the air, when the fact was made known, and, amidst reiterated cries of "Somerset for ever!" Hugh was declared the victor. The three challenges were again given out but no one replied to them. The prize, a new hat of the sort worn by countrymen, was given to the victor, who insisted on Master Castle wearing it for his sake, and to hide the ugly wound on his hitherto invincible head.

The old man accepted the hat, saying that he had been fairly beaten, but by a trick that he had never seen practised before.

"Thanks to my fencing-master," said Hugh, as he jumped from the stage, "I have achieved a very easy victory."

"Make way there, make way for Doctor Grave-boys," screamed Mistress Luckes, "he hath a sovereign remedy for broken pates."

"Permit me to apply this never-failing *unguentum* to your wounded head," said the doctor, addressing old Master Castle.

"I will see thee and thy Ann Quintin at the devil first; a little cold water will soon stanch the blood, aided by a few pinches of beaver from my hat; and a quart or two of strong ale will allay the pain."

"And produce inflammation," said the doctor.
"Jansen bring a bottle of my *elixir vite*."

"He licks her what?" said the old man, giving Jansen such a thrust with his elbow as nearly upset him and his box of medicaments. "I tell thee I will ha' none of thy filthy drugs, but will hasten to the booth of Master Luckes, and confer a cup of good ale on yonder lad, who is gamesome and generous both."

Hugh declined the offer, and left his antagonist to go with Giles Tudball to see the climbing for the leg of mutton, a prize that Master Will Bowering carried off, after he had permitted several country competitors to rub all the grease off the pole in their attempts to reach it.

Next followed a race after a huge pig, with a very short and well-soaped tail. This afforded most excellent sport, as the animal, being used to his native woods, in which he gained his autumnal

and winter livelihood, was very active, and led his pursuers a dance that they did not forget for many a day. After being chased for nearly an hour, he fairly gave them the slip, and they returned to the green with torn clothes and wounded limbs, to be laughed at by their friends.

Then came on the jingling-match, which is thus played. Six men toss up which of them shall first bear the bell; he upon whom the lot falls strips to the waist, and fastens the bell to his loins by means of a strap or handkerchief.

The others are blindfolded, and placed at a certain distance, in a circle, from the jingler. As soon as he moves, the bell rings, and all rush forward and try to catch him. His business is to elude them, which he does by every means in his power; and, if he can avoid being caught for ten minutes, he has the prize; if not, the man who takes him becomes the jingler in turn, and so on, until one succeeds in baffling his pursuers for the required space of time. The fun consists in the blunders which the blinded make, in running against and catching one another instead of the bell-man; and in

tumbling over obstacles that he throws in their way. The more they are baffled the more the people laugh and enjoy the sport.

When this was ended, the running in sacks commenced; and when the victor had received his reward, a space of an hour was allowed to those of the wrestlers who had joined in other sports, to recover their wind, previously to entering the ring to decide the most important part of the day's sport.

Julian Bachell, while the pig was chased, had contrived to speak a few words with the mediciner on the subject of the warning which Jansen had put into his hands; he learnt from him, that he had received an intimation from a trusty messenger, that the Bailiff of Dunster, a sort of chief constable, a man of a sour temper and much addicted to puritanism, had given out that he should call in the civil power to aid him in saving the temple of the Lord—meaning Culbone church—from the profanations of sinners. He added, that he marvelled he had not yet put his threats into execution.

Nothing however occurred to prevent the sports going on. Some were engaged in throwing the

bar and putting the stone; others amused themselves by playing at quoits; while the majority, among whom were Julian Bachell and Hugh and de Mohun, joined the merry dance around the minstrels, having each selected a pretty country lass as a partner. The morris-dancers mingled with the rest, and, by the jingling of their bells, added to the noise, if not to the merriment of the scene.

At a given signal, the wrestlers left their tent, and took their stations near the stage. Master Richard Luckes was appointed umpire, and the first pair of combatants mounted. The defeated man retired and another took his place, until six had contended, and one was left conqueror. All this occupied much time, and excited great interest. Every fall was attended with loud shouts from the victor's friends, and he who remained the conqueror at last, was greeted with universal plaudits.

The shouts, however, were hushed when Alloway mounted the stage, and, throwing off his upper coat, called in a loud voice for the Dunster student to come forth and try the best of three falls with him.

Hugh sprung up to meet his adversary, already prepared for the struggle. Giles Tudball, Will Bowering, Master Jenkins, and the doctor, with his man Jansen, stood close to the platform, by the side of the wrestlers who had retired from it, to be ready in case of any foul play being meditated. Julian was on the opposite side, near some of his father's tenantry and servants, to whom he meant to appeal if their aid was required.

Master Alloway had been drinking more than he was aware of, and the liquor, and a sense of his former disgrace, added to the taunts of friends and foes, had put him in a very bad humour. He resolved not to shew any mercy to his young foe, but to rush in upon him, and if possible disable him from trying a second fall.

Hugh was cool and collected, and smiled, as he presented himself for the struggle, at the evident ill-temper of the butcher. Not a word was spoken; as they grappled, Hugh tried to shift his arms and grasp Alloway round the waist, to throw him over his hips, but the butcher, knowing how he had been defeated before, anticipated the movement,

and succeeded in raising Hugh from the ground. He lifted him up high in the air and would have dashed him furiously to the earth and fallen on him, had not Hugh clasped his thighs so closely with his legs, that he caused him to stagger, and both came to the ground together.

"A fall, a fair fall!" shouted the wrestlers and the friends of Minehead.

"No fall, no fall, both down together," cried the Dunster men and the majority, who were evidently in favour of the youthful student.

"By G—d it was a fair fall!" cried the six wrestlers pressing towards the stage.

"Stand back—fair play—let the umpire decide," said Giles Tudball and his friends, placing themselves between the stage and the wrestlers, who, seeing that preparations were made to resist their interference, shouted to Master Luckes to decide.

"No fall," said the umpire, amidst loud shouts.

The combatants again grappled, and the butcher threw out all his strength to overcome Hugh, who, like a pliant willow twig, gave way only to spring back again, until, watching his opportunity, he,

with a slight touch of his foot, tripped up his rival and threw him from him on his back.

"A fair fall!" said the umpire.

"Take time, Master Alloway," said Hugh, "to recover your breath."

"I will take nothing of you but my revenge," said the butcher, staggering to his place and again grappling with Hugh, who, without giving him a moment's time, slipped from his hold, and, seizing him round the waist, threw him heavily over his hip upon the turf.

"The second fair fall, and the best of three!" from the umpire, was greeted with louder shouts from all but the regular wrestlers, who looked at each other and growled their dissatisfaction.

Again the combatants, at the earnest prayer of the defeated man, stood opposite to each other, and had just grasped elbow and collar, when a circumstance, which must be recorded in another chapter, put a premature end to the interesting struggle.

CHAPTER VI.

THE crowd, who were gazing on in deep silence around the wrestlers' ring, and anxiously waiting for the players to commence the last good-naturedly conceded trial of skill and strength, were suddenly roused by a stentorian voice, calling to them, in the name of the Parliament of England, to abstain from forbidden sports and pastimes.

They turned to look at the speaker, and saw a tall gaunt figure dressed in a sort of half military suit of shabby leather. He wore a rusty breastplate over his chest, and an iron cap, fastened under his chin by a leathern thong, upon his head. In his right hand he carried a long pike tipped with steel, and in his left he held what seemed to be a parchment writing. By his side walked a thin weazen-

faced man, clad in a suit of dark brown, with a short cloak of a sad colour, on his shoulders, and a high-peaked felt hat with an enormous breadth of brim, upon his head. His hair was closely cropped, and made his ears appear of an unnatural size; upon his neck was a broad falling collar, and upon his shrivelled legs a pair of large, loose, calf-skin boots; his right hand was supported by a strong crutch-headed stick, and under his left arm he carried a large black-bound bible, whose covers were kept together with a pair of enormous silver clasps.

Behind this pair of strange-looking figures, followed six men, dressed and armed like their gaunt leader, and casting sour and morose glances upon the assembled revellers.

They had approached close to the crowd without being observed, and made their way to the stage without opposition. Hugh de Mohun and Master Alloway, relaxed the hold they had taken of each other, and turned to gaze on the cause which had interrupted their play.

“Hugh de Mohun, pupil of the half papist priest of Dunster, and you, Master Alloway of Minehead,

leave off your ungodly wrestlings with the fleshly arm, and come down from your unlawful pre-eminence," shouted the tall leader, as he threw one of his long legs upon the turf, and raised himself to the platform by the aid of his pike.

"Who is he that dares stop our sports?" said some of the crowd.

"It is Master Roger Priver, the wool-comber of Dunster, who claims to be high bailiff of the town," cried some Dunster men.

"And who is that little scarecrow, that hath crawled up to the stage in his rear?"

"That is Master Robert Browne, who writeth himself reverend, and who was turned out of his pulpit in Dunster church, for preaching strange doctrines."

"Is he come here to preach to us, think you?"

"I doubt it not, for see, he is preparing to open his battery: he is unclasping his black book."

Hugh de Mohun placed his cap on his head, and, folding his arms across his chest, gazed calmly in Master Priver's face. Alloway, laying aside all feelings of animosity, stood by his late foe, to support him, if necessary, against the civil force.

"Down I say, young man, and depart in peace, lest a worse thing befall thee," shouted Master Roger," and thou, butcher, get thee home to thy shambles, lest thy body be converted into as worthless a carcass as one of the rotten sheep that thou sometimes cheatest thy customers withal."

"Thou liest! thou snivelling wool-tearer--"

"Nay Master Alloway, speak him fair," said Hugh; "by what authority, Master Roger Priver, are you here to interrupt our innocent amusements?"

"Innocent! sayest thou? soul-destroying, carnal, devilish—" began the puritan priest.

"Hush, Master Browne, hush!" said the bailiff, "waste not thy words on such as he. I am here, Hugh de Mohun, in mine office as high bailiff of Dunster, deputed by—"

"Thou art not high bailiff. Master Thomas Luttrell, by virtue of his rights as lord of the manor of Dunster, and a lieutenant of the county, did depose thee from thine office for illegally supporting the recreant priest there in his heterodoxy. He hath his rights from the king."

"King me no king, bold boy, I am appointed to

mine office by the parliament, whose power is above the king's."

Not yet I trow, Master Roger, though the round-headed knaves begin to express their disaffection and disloyalty a little too openly. We, of the loyal county of Somerset, care not for the parliament; we obey our lawful sovereign, King Charles."

"Long live King Charles, and down with the puritan parliament!" shouted the crowd. "Fell the wool-comber to the ground, butcher, and you, Master Hugh, toss the snuffling preacher over to our tender mercies."

The six bailiff's men, thinking their captain in danger, mounted the stage and took their places by his side; at the same time, Julian Bachell, Giles Tudball, and several others, among whom were the wrestlers, one by one gained the stage, and ranged themselves near their friends.

"Down, down, I say to thee, Hugh de Mohun," cried Roger Priver, "or I will strike thee with my pike."

Hugh felt for his pistols, forgetting that he had taken them from his belt and given them into the

care of Doctor Graveboys, before he began to contend in the wrestling match.

Roger Priver saw the motion, and understood the meaning of it. "Ah, ah !" he cried, "would'st use carnal arms against the deputed officer of the parliament? down I say, or I will strike thee."

As he spoke, he lowered the handle of his pike, meaning to strike the haft of it on the ground; but it unfortunately lighted, but not lightly, on the foot of butcher Alloway, who, stung with the pain and the disasters of the day, struck the bailiff a blow in the face, which would have stretched his body on the turf, had he not been caught in his fall and supported by his men.

"Curses light on thee!" shouted the bailiff, "lay on my men—cut, slay, and destroy."

"Hew them down—cut into pieces the men of Belial, even as Samuel hewed Agag," cried the preacher.

"Down with the clothier loons, whose hands are more suited to the shuttle than the spear," shouted the crowd as they rushed towards the stage.

A few blows were exchanged, and a general fight

would have ensued, had not the pikes been wrested from the hands of Roger Priver and his followers, and Julian Bachell, aided by Hugh de Mohun, done all he could by word and deed to prevent bloodshed.

Still the crowd pressed on, and the platform was filled. Roger Priver, seeing that he was protected by the two young men, drew forth his commission, and a proclamation from the parliament forbidding the holding of wakes, fairs, revels, and all sorts of junketings. He read the contents at the top of his loud voice, but his words were drowned by the hissings, hootings, and revilings of the crowd: at last, just as he was finishing the long, wordy proclamation, butcher Alloway snatched the parchment from his hand, and, in the midst of loud hurrahs, tore it into pieces, and scattered the shreds amongst the crowd below.

Again a fight had nearly ensued, for the bailiff was not deficient in courage, and made a rush at Alloway, to recover his much-prized warrant of service. Julian and Hugh, however, seized him each by one of his long bony arms, and begged him not to risk his life by his rashness.

"I care not for life, tear me limb from limb an you list; I will have my own. Woe, woe, he hath torn my warrant into shreds—Ichabod! Ichabod! my glory hath departed."

"Gag the canting thief"—cried Giles Tudball, "or we shall have bloodshed."

"Silence," cried Julian "silence, my friends! let them depart in peace, and let us resume our sports."

"And who art thou that would'st dictate to us, Sir Forester," cried one of the crowd. "Better seek thy hut in Exmoor, and look after thy bucks and does."

"Hush," said one near him, a fair-haired girl, "thou knowest not whom thou insultest, and would'st give thy tongue a bite, ere thou said'st wrong of the seeming forester."

"And who is the mummer then, wench?"

"Thy master's son, Julian Bachell," said the girl in a whisper, "and may your lands be taken from you, and your farm be given to another, if you do not see that he suffer no wrong."

The man left his place, and sought his brother

tenants, to whom he communicated the news he had just learnt. They gathered together in a body, and forced their way to the stage, to be ready to assist their young master, if he should appear to need their help.

“Silence: I entreat you to hear me,” cried Julian.

“Hear him not—hear him not—he will seduce you with words of man’s wisdom,” cried the preacher, “listen rather to me, and I will expose to you your wickedness, and show unto you on what a broken reed you are leaning. In the book of Numbers, chapter—” but his words were drowned in the shouts of the crowd, who called to those on the platform to kill the high bailiff and his clothier loons, and to pull out the false priest’s wagging tongue.

“To Tophet shall you go—to Tophet—lo! the fire is kindled, put on more thorns—heap on the wood—make it hot—”shouted the preacher, “truly into the pit shall ye be hurled—ye shall go down below—”

“Nay rather,” said Master Jenkins, “*you* shall

go down below, for I will save thee in spite of thyself from the fate that will befall thee, if thou utterest thy follies and threats to the irritated crowd."

The Welshman placed his left hand upon the priest's mouth, and taking him under his right arm, bore him, struggling and kicking with all his might and main, into the wood beyond the crowd, where he strapped him to a tree by his belt, and left him with his cloak tied round his head, to preach through its thick folds to the trees and tethered horses.

While this was going on, Master Roger Priver, who was held tightly by the young men, turned to Julian, and inquired who he was that dared to oppose the authority of parliament by confining the person of their deputed officer.

"It matters not who I am ; I am anxious to prevent the murder of your men, and to save your life, if you will only listen to and follow my advice," said Julian.

"Thou slayer of deer and trainer of dogs, thou bloodhound, who huntest after those who would take the wild beasts of the forest, which were made

for the use of all men! I will not listen to such as thou art, but will wrestle with thee even to the death."

Roger, as he said this, foaming at the mouth like a maniac, suddenly withdrew his arm, and struck Julian a severe blow.

"A Bachell, a Bachell! to the rescue," shouted the man to whom the lodge-keeper's daughter had given the information that it was his young master, who, disguised as a forester, was taking so prominent a part in the proceedings of the day.

"Ah! ah! a Bachell," cried the excited bailiff, who was still held by Hugh de Mohun. "A Bachell is it?—spawn of a tyrant, thy father shall rue this day."

"To the rescue!" cried the tenants and servants of Ashley Combe, and like a wave they surged forward in a body, and filled the platform.

"Back—back—I intreat you, blood will flow else. I am not hurt," cried Julian.

"We will not back, until we have paid the insolent wool-comber for the blow."

"Nay, nay, hurt him not; take away his follow-

ers, and see them safe from the crowd, if you love me; we will manage the bailiff, who is already held securely by my friend and Giles Tudball; away with them, and use them not ill."

The men obeyed the former part of their young master's wishes, and seized the bailiff's followers, who offered no resistance, but permitted themselves to be dragged through the crowd, who jeered, hissed, and shouted at them as they passed to the spot where the preacher had been conveyed by Master Jenkins. There, however, the latter part of Julian's orders was not attended to; for they bound them with their faces to the trees, and administered to each and all of them a sound drubbing, with some stout hazel wands and young ground-ashes, which they cut for the purpose.

"Here, Will, where art thou man?" shouted Giles Tudball.

"Here, at your starboard elbow, captain," replied Will.

"Thou art good at a running-knot, give two turns of your belt round this babbler's mouth, and make it fast behind; he will not stow his talk, while the lee-scuppers of his mouth remain open."

"In the name of the parl—" began Roger Priver, but ere he could finish the terrible threat, the belt was passed twice over his mouth, and he finished in dumb-show, dancing with wrath so vigorously, that it changed the anger of the crowd to mirth.

"To the brook with him!—duck him, duck him! the cold water will cure his rage," cried Master Richard Luckes, who doubtless felt assured in his mind that the bailiff's interference with the sports would greatly diminish the profits of his booth.

"To the brook—to the brook!" shouted the crowd, and in spite of all Julian and Hugh could do, Master Roger Priver was seized by the people nearest, and hurried off to the brook, where he was laid at the bottom of the stream, and turned over and over until he was well nigh drowned.

"Enough, enough, you will murder 'him," shouted Hugh.

"And a good thing too—he deserves it; but we will save him for another fate; he will be sure to be hanged some day," said Giles Tudball, who thus made the crowd laugh, and probably saved the fellow's life.

"The preacher, the preacher! let us duck the preacher! He must needs be dry—dry as his own discourses," cried the crowd; and a rush was made towards the spot where the deposed minister was tied, and still uttering anathemas in the dark against his persecutors.

Before they could reach the spot, they were arrested in their career by an extraordinary noise. All the horses and ponies that were tethered to the trees in the wood, set up a loud and prolonged neighing, and were replied to by other horses who seemed to be coming down the combe.

"Even the dumb animals are laughing to think how rightly the knaves have been served," said Giles Tudball.

"It strikes me that they are putting a veto on the proceedings, by saying *neigh* to them," said the mediciner's man, who stood by Hugh and Julian and laughed loudly at his own wit.

The neighing ceased, and as the crowd were silent, the heavy tread as of a body of horse was heard coming down the hard, rocky path beside the brook. In a few minutes, a tall elderly man

dressed in a horseman's suit of dark grey, with a cloak, falling collar, and large steeple-crowned hat, a huge rapier called a tuck at his side, and a large pair of pistols at his saddle-bow, rode from under the trees, followed by a troop of soldiers, to the number of twenty, and all heavily armed.

"Who are these?" asked Hugh de Mohun.

"As I live," cried the mediciner, "it is Master John Pym. I know him well, for I have seen him oft in his own borough of Tavistock—away, away!—Giles Tudball, your boat is in readiness, give me and my man Jansen a cast to Minehead. Come, young sir, and you Will Bowering follow me; no time must be lost; through the wood here, where they cannot follow us without dismounting."

So saying, Dr. Graveboys dashed into the cop-pice, and led the way to the cove of Culbone, followed by Giles Tudball and the rest of the party. Julian was anxious to find his way home through the woods, but was dissuaded by Hugh de Mohun and Giles Tudball, who offered to land him at Porlock-wear.

A breeze was blowing from the westward, the

wind having chopped round during the day, as if to favor their escape; and a few minutes saw the lug-sails set with every reef shaken out, and the Blossom of Minehead running before the wind, and with the tide in her favour.

"We are well out of his clutches," said the doctor, as they sailed along.

"Nay *we* can hardly be said to be safe, though *you* may be," said Julian.

"Well, never mind," said Hugh, "do not let us be melancholy—come Giles, strike up a merry song."

Giles complied at once, and trolled forth

THE BOATMAN'S SONG.

Spread wide to the winds the fluttering sails,
Bid the masts the strong gales defy;
The heart of the mariner never quails,
Who relies for protection on high.

CHORUS.

With good canvass aloft, and stout oak below
What fear we my messmates where'er we go!

Our loved ones at home watch our craft from the shore,
As the treacherous billows we dare ;
And we fear not the wave's tempestuous roar,
For they raise for our safety a prayer.

With, &c.

Then court the fierce winds for our gallant boat,
She will skim o'er the waves like a bird ;
And when in our haven we quietly float,
They will know that their prayers were heard.

With, &c.

This song was followed by many more, ere Julian Bachell leapt ashore at the wear of Porlock ; and, bidding farewell to his friends, sought the Lodge of Ashley Combe.

CHAPTER VII.

MASTER Luckes, the harbour-master of the port of Minehead, had been left by his son in charge of the Ship-aground, while he and his spouse were absent at the revels at Culbone. Knowing the old gentleman's propensity for indulging in strong waters, his daughter-in-law had left him a half-pint of brandy for his own drinking, locked the cupboard in which the spirits were kept, and taken the key with her.

Master Luckes was not long in getting through his modicum, for he had but little else to do but to sit, and sip, and smoke his pipe. Most of the customers of the little hostelry were either gone to the revel, or were too busy in their respective occupations to find time for sitting and soaking in an

alehouse. The brandy being finished, and, having nothing else to do, for he could not endure a dry pipe, Master Luckes threw himself back in a huge leather-covered chair, and fell fast asleep, after he had warned the wench who was chambermaid, boots, waitress, and even ostler upon occasion, to keep a sharp look-out, and rouse him if a customer came in. Mabel watched him till she saw he was sound asleep, and then tripped lightly across the street to the quay to have a little talk with her sweetheart, the mate of the *St. David*, who was busy in unlading her cargo, in the absence of Master Jenkins, his skipper.

How long Master Luckes had been asleep, he did not know, when he was roused by a deep-toned melodious voice calling in his ear, "What ho! harbour-master, art dead? or have your potations been so deep as to produce a lethargy?"

"Mabel—ye pest—Mabel ye good-for-naught," cried the old man not turning round in his chair, "hear ye not? a customer calleth for ale. Mix it wench, for the big tun runneth somewhat hard and stale."

"Mabel, man, like the rest of the gadabouts of Minyead is off for the junketings at Culbone, I believe; and here have I been wasting my lungs in calling house, until I was weary, and was about to leave what I thought a deserted place, when I saw thy lean carcass ensconced in the chair; rouse thee man!"

"Mabel, Mabel, where is the jade?" cried the old man.

"Out, I tell thee; gone a-junketing like her master and mistress. Thou art parcel-drunk, harbour-master, and hast been drinking the strong waters thyself in lack of customers."

"Who says that?" said the old man, looking round sharply, "who dares to say that I would defraud any one, letting alone mine own son? Ah, Master Robert Quirke, I do demand your forgiveness; I was somewhat sleepy and overcome with much business."

"With much liquor, more likely. Your eyes bear proof that your lips and the goblet have been too intimately acquainted."

"I have tasted but one half-pint all the day,

Master Quirke ; I am an ill-used man for—would you believe it?—Richard's wife hath turned key on the spirit-cupboard, and left me not the means of solacing myself with a cordial, or of supplying such as you with aught but cider or ale, which are wont to cause a coldness of stomach."

"I would taste your ale, Master Luckes, which is wont to be good," said the stranger, taking a seat.

"Good enough, I trow, for ale—but still chilly to an aged stomach. Mabel, I say, what Mabel!"

"You are wasting much of the little breath you have left ; Mabel I tell you is gone, like the rest, a-revelling."

"Nay, I am here sir," said Mabel, who on seeing a customer enter the inn, had left her sweetheart, run round into the house by the back-door, and now made her appearance with a platter in one hand and a cloth in the other, to make the locum tenens of her master and mistress believe, that she had been busily engaged in the duties of the pantry.

"Where hast been, wench, that thou didst not answer when I called so long and loudly?"

"I cried 'coming' but I could not leave my work at a moment's warning," said the girl; "but you grow deaf, and the brandy you drank made you sleep heavily."

"Brandy ! ye ne'er do well ; thou knowest—but what boots it to complain to such as thou ? down into the cellar, girl, and draw for Master Robert Quirke of the best."

The girl obeyed and returned with a full quart into which she put a bit of toasted bread and grated a little ginger and nutmeg, and then handed it to the guest, who took a deep draught before he passed it to the harbour-master. The old man smelt it, and put it down from his mouth, his resolution not to taste of it, however, failed him ; and, after a few words upon the coldness and unwholesomeness of it to aged stomachs, he raised it to his lips and drained it to the dregs.

Master Quirke smiled, as he filled his pipe, and bade Mabel prepare a second quart, and spice it well, lest it should disagree with Master Luckes. The old man did not like the smile, and, fearing that he should have a lecture on his well-known failing,

to turn away the guest's attention, expressed his surprise that he had not been to the revel.

"Revels, Master Luckes, I have done with. I am an old man like yourself, though my hand trembles not, and my legs are not swollen; for I have shunned aught in the way of drink but good wholesome ale. I have been a fortunate man; and though I have worked hard through calm and storm as a mariner, I have escaped the dangers of the deep. I would show my gratitude to heaven, by leaving some portion of the riches which I have accumulated for the benefit of my fellow-men."

"Folks say that Master Quirke is building a mansion for himself in the town, on the acres he hath bought of Squire Luttrell," said the harbour-master.

"I am building; but not for myself, Master Luckes. Folks say wrong if they report that I design to build a mansion to dwell in."

"What mean then the cargoes of stone and lime, and timber, that pay the duties of the harbour, and are all consigned to Robert Quirke?"

"I tell thee, man, I am building; but not for myself, and when I have closed this door that Mabel's sharp ears may not be benefited, I will reveal to thee what no mortal has ever yet heard."

When Master Quirke had closed the door, he took his seat by the fire again, and, after a deep draught of the replenished jack, disclosed his secret thus:

"Thou knowest, Master Luckes, that when Mistress Leckey died some ten years since, she told her son, who used to freight vessels here, and trade to Waterford, that she would appear upon earth again, and grant him a wind which he might have whistled for in vain."

"I know it well," said the old man.

"But you do not know that I believed not in the tale, but even scoffed at it, and assigned the ruin of Tom Leckey to his fondness for the goblet and the can, rather than to the tricks and whims of his dead mother. I have laughed when they told me of her pranks on shore and at sea."

"Ah, I have heard thee, I have heard thee, in this very room, Master Quirke, jeer at the pot-

tycarrier when he told thee that Dame Leckey, the grey woman of Minyeard, had beaten him black and blue with her crutched stick, because he failed to help her ghostship over a stile."

"I did laugh, and should laugh even now at so improbable a story, Master Luckes, had I not seen and heard her myself."

"As how?" said the harbour-master, looking round, as if afraid of seeing the grey woman at his elbow, and assailing the ale-jack to give him courage.

"It was on a dreary night, this last December. I had been over to Swansea, with a cargo of goods, and was returning with a freight of wools for the Dunster clothiers. My crew were asleep below, and I was alone on deck, standing near the tiller. It was a dead calm, and I had taken a double turn of the starboard guy-rope, and made it fast to the tiller, to keep the ship's head steady in the tide; and, as I smoked my pipe, and whistled now and then for a wind to waft me up Channel and into harbour, I heard of a sudden as it were the flap of wings, and something passed close to me which looked like a large sea-gull; it sailed up aloft,

and settled on the mast-head. I should have accounted it to be some scared sea-mew, for it whistled loud and shrill, had I not known that the webbed feet of such birds, are all unfitted for lighting on 'a dog-vane. Well, harbour-master, there it sat, and whistled so shrilly, that its cry might have been heard at Cardiff, as it seemed to me. Suddenly, the wind arose and filled the mainsail, so that the vessel lay over on her side, and the foaming waters rushed over the gunwale and flooded her deck. I was fain to haul up the main-tack, and to shout to the crew below. No one answered to my call. I looked aloft, and there sat the same grey figure, but, instead of the whistling which I before heard, the sound of gibes and laughter reached my ear, amidst the rattling of the top-gear and the creaking of ropes and blocks. I was an angered, Master Luckes, and in my anger I swore and used profane words, and told the bird, as I thought it, if he were the devil himself and would alight on the deck, I would do his bidding whatever it might be."

"T'was rash language, Master Quirke, and I

doubt not, no good came of it," said the harbour-master.

"I had scarce spoken the words, when the figure sprung lightly from the mast-head, and stood before me on the deck. The binnacle light showed me the visage of a grey woman, that is a woman dressed in a grey suit, such as Mistress Leckey of Minyead ever wore. I could see through her form, Master Luckes, the mast and the cordage, and the main hatchway before which she stood. I would have spoken to her, but, somehow or other, my tongue refused its office, and my throat felt as though I had swallowed hot coals. I could only gaze on her, and, though the wind blew louder than any hurricane in the Western Indies, and the waves roared and splashed against the vessel's sides, I heard these words as distinctly as if the dead calm, which I had been whistling to dispel, had continued:

'Thou hast but one son and never a spouse
To inherit thy hard-earn'd gains;
Build for the poor a goodly almshouse,
It will save thee of hell the pains.' "

"And what followed—did she disappear in blue flames and leave the smell of brimstone behind

her?" said Master Luckes, scarcely above his breath.

"I cannot tell you; I was roused as from a deep sleep by my crew, whom the rolling of the ship, and the wash of the waves against her clinker-built sides, had brought upon deck. I said nothing of what I had seen and heard; but, as we rushed before the wind up Channel, and made our port, I vowed to Heaven to comply with the commands so fearfully sent to me. I bought a piece of land overright the market-house of good Master Luttrell, and am building what I hope may prove a quiet resting-place for those who may be in need and necessity, for centuries after I am dead and gone."

"Did you not consult the parson?" said Master Luckes.

"I did not; such was my intention, but, as you know Master Robert Browne of Dunster had unsettled men's minds; and our patron was gone to Bath to lay complaints against him before the Bishop, and to have the good Master Snelling inducted in his room. I kept my counsel, therefore, and though I believe that what I saw and heard was

but a dream, I am not sorry that I resolved to act upon it. But you will keep my secret, Master Luckes, until I am dead and gone?"

"Ay, will I indeed, though in truth 'tis a marvellous tale and worthy recording."

"What, ho! within there! house, I say!" cried a shrill voice, which made Master Luckes nearly spring from his seat.

"Bah! man, never be frightened. It is the cry of -Master Basil Chipera, the parish-clerk and cordwainer of Dunster," said Master Quirke.

"And what brings him here I wonder?" said the temporary landlord, as the individual named opened the door and entered the room.

"As good a forest pony as ever was foaled on Exmoor, Master Luckes," said a little, shrivelled figure, dressed in a suit of iron-grey. "Here are rare doings, my masters, up at Dunster, I trow."

"What news dost bring?" inquired Robert Quirke.

"Here hath been a half-score horsemen of the new militia raised by Master John Pym, to speer after master Hugh de Mohun, whom they accuse

of revelling and rioting in an ungodly manner at Culbone."

"Is he not at home then?" inquired the cunning old harbour-master.

"Thou knowest very well, Master Luckes, that he donned his mumming dress, and went away this morning early in the Blossom of Minyeard with Giles Tudball. There has been it seems, an attack made upon Master Robert Browne, Roger Priver and his constables, who would have been foully murdered, had not Master Pym ridden over Dunkery hill and been at hand in time to save them," said Basil Chipera.

"And what business had the like of them at Culbone?" asked the old man.

"Roger Priver, had it seems, authority from the parliament to put a stop to the revels, but not having a warrant from Master Thomas Luttrell, who is away to fetch his ward, no one would obey him, and Master Alloway and your son Richard and others, have got themselves into trouble, and are under arrest."

"And Hugh de Mohun?" inquired Master Luckes.

"Is escaped with Giles Tudball, Will Bowering, and the mediciner, whom you know as Dr. Graveboys. The soldiers await his return to Dunster Castle, and I, whom they shut up in the upper room of the gateway, made bold to slip down, as doth Master Hugh, by means of the ivy-stems, and mount my pony and gallop down here, to give him warning of his danger."

"And what says good parson Snelling, thy master and the boy's tutor?" said Robert Quirke.

"He is nigh distraught. He has been wondering all day where his charge might be, and many lies have I been obliged to invent to account for his absence; but what is to be done? if he comes up to Dunster he will be arrested, and the Lord knows what may be the upshot of it."

"Do you return to Dunster, Master Basil, and leave the young man to me. Take a draught of ale, and hie thee back to comfort the good parson," said Robert Quirke.

It was growing dark when the parish clerk of Dunster remounted his forest pony and galloped along the quay. Robert Quirke, as soon as he

was fairly out of sight, descended the steps of the pier, and, getting into a boat, rowed off to the head of the harbour, whence he could get a view of any vessel rounding Greenaleigh point and steering for Minehead. His practised eye soon detected the lugger of Giles Tudball coming up Channel, and he pulled vigorously to get to her side before she tacked to run into the harbour.

CHAPTER VIII.

WE must leave Master Robert Quirke, to wait for the coming up of the Blossom of Minehead, while we return to the scene of Culbone revel.

No sooner had the soldiers, with Master John Pym at their head, taken possession of the ground lately occupied by the revellers, than most of those assembled followed the example set them by the mediciner and Giles Tudball, and made the best of their way to their respective homes, for fear of consequences, which, being unknown, appeared doubly fearful.

Master Pym, stationing himself as nearly as he could in the middle of the green, close to the raised platform, drew from his pocket a piece of parch-

ment, bearing a twin-like resemblance to the skin carried by the bailiff, Roger Priver, which Alloway had torn into shreds. He opened it deliberately, and, as he held it closely to his eyes, which some sixty years' use had rendered somewhat weak, the better to read its contents, the said bailiff, dripping with wet and exhausted by the ill-usage he had met with, laid his hand upon his knee, and begged him to seize the transgressors of the law, before they could make their escape.

"Not so, good bailiff, I will not follow their example, but will proceed legally. I was bred to the bar, and require not to be taught my duty ; did I not impeach Buckingham and Mainwaring, and conduct and bring to a happy issue the trial of the Lord Strafford ? and have I not successfully resisted the illegal attempt of Charles Stuart, to arrest me and four other members of the parliament, within the house of Commons ? Back good Master Priver, and let me not, I pray thee, said John Pym, in a voice drawlingly slow, but firm.

"Nay but Master Pym, I would avenge myself on mine adversaries whiles they are in the way with

me," said the bailiff. "Have I not had my commission stolen from me, been roughly handled, and well-nigh suffocated in the waters that overwhelmed me? Have not my men been maltreated, and, with the pious and God-fearing Master Browne, been tied to trees and beaten with ashen boughs? I would avenge me and mine."

"Take four of my troop, and release the divine and thy companions, and if, when I have read the order of the parliament in the ears of the people, any of the malcontents become captives to thy spear and thy bow, thou mayest arrest them, but leave the law to punish them: 'Vengeance is mine,' thou knowest the rest."

Roger Priver did as he was ordered, and while, he went to release the unfortunate posse comitatus and the deposed minister, Master Pym read in slow and solemn tones, a long rigmarole, couched in the puritanical and half blasphemous style of the age, against, 'wakes, revels, junketings, church-ales, bride-ales, and such-like ungodly sports.' His only hearers were his soldiery, who, with solemn visages and upturned eyes, pronounced a sonorous snuf-

fling Amen, as he concluded and folded up the proclamation.

The only parties who had not fled were Master Richard Luckes, his wife, and Alloway, who, while the proclamation was being read, were hastily dismantling the tent or drinking-booth, and hurrying their goods as fast as they could into the boat of Master Jenkins, who was waiting for them in the cove. No sooner, however, had Roger Priver unbound his captive officers and the preacher, than he strode hastily across the green, followed by Master Pym and the soldiers, and commenced an attack upon the canvass tent which was speedily torn into tatters and rent in twain, as the preacher said, like the veil which hid the Scheckinah from the eyes of the Israelites.

Master Luckes and the butcher resisted manfully, but were soon overpowered, and bound tightly with sword-belts to trees. Mrs. Luckes amused herself by alternately sobbing and abusing her enemies in good set terms to the horror of the divine, who undertook to convince her, in a sermon of sixteen heads, that she was nought but a modern Jezabel.

Master Jenkins, seeing his friends in captivity, and knowing that his single arm could not release them loosed his boat and pushed off from shore.

As soon as the tent was demolished, an attack was made on its contents, the spigots were torn from the barrels, and beer and cider flowed forth in streams; the casks themselves were next demolished with the aid of quoits and throwing-bars; and the bottles containing the strong waters would have shared their fate, had not some one suggested to Roger Priver that his immersion in the brook might prove dangerous to him, unless he took something as a preventive of cold.

Roger took the hint and the preventive, in a copious draught from a squat bottle; an example that was followed by every one of the party, although they took it in so solemn a manner, and with such sour looks, that a spectator might have fancied they were swallowing one of Master Graveboy's most nauseous specifics, instead of right good Scheidam or pure Dantzic. The bottles, having been emptied, were broken to pieces, and the party looked round for some other abomination whereon to

work destruction. The only thing, however, that remained, was the gay hangings suspended from the oak by the minstrels, which, in their hurry and haste to escape, they had been unable to remove; a few seconds saw them torn into shreds and scattered to the winds.

All this time Master John Pym stood by, viewing the scene with a solemn visage and not saying a word, although Mrs. Luckes was intreating him at the top of her lungs "to exert his authority and save her worldly goods," which did not in the least interfere with the exhortation of the divine, who had just got to "and seventhly" in his discourse, when the commander ordered his troops to fall in and Roger Priver to follow with the prisoners. Mistress Luckes was placed on her own pillion behind the preacher, who insisted upon this arrangement that he might conclude his sermon as they marched. Her husband and Alloway were strapped each behind a trooper, with their hands securely tied *en derrière*.

In this way they ascended the path, across the brook, down which Julian Bachell and Hugh de

Mohun had come in the morning. It was already getting dusk, and the branches which overhung them made the road dark and dangerous to be travelled; so that they proceeded but slowly, to enable those on foot to keep up with the horsemen.

Before they reached the summit of the first ascent, the horse, the property of Master Richard Luckes, on which the preacher and Mistress Luckes rode, commenced a series of gambols, a thing he was never known to do before; which ended in his stumbling over a huge stone, and pitching Master Browne over his head; much to the delight of its other rider, who kept her seat by clinging to her pillion, and quietly extracted the pin which she had inserted into the beast's skin, when she found her plan for ridding herself of the preacher had been successful. As nothing could induce the divine to mount again, he was obliged to shuffle after the horse, commencing his "thirteenthly" between his deep pantings as he best might.

"Forward, master high bailiff," cried one of the soldiers, "Master Pym would confer with thee."

Roger Priver went to the head of the little band, and walked beside the leader's horse.

"Did I not understand thee to say, that the son of the malignant man Bachell, of Ashley Lodge hard by, was one of those who assaulted thee in thy duty?"

"Yea did I; he was mumm'd as a forester of Exmoor, and did use me grievously," said Roger Priver.

"He was leader doubtless in the ungodly pastimes?"

"Yea verily—that is to say joint-leader with the other springald who was disguised, as a seaman."

"What name doth he bear?"

"Hugh de Mohun; he dwelleth with Master Robert Snelling, who did dispossess good Master Browne of his pulpit, over the gateway of Dunster Castle, of which one Basil Chipera is warder and parish-clerk, for want of a better," said the bailiff.

"Countenanced in his disobedience by the surpliced priest and that other malignant who owneth Dunster, Master Thomas Luttrell, doubtless?"

"Thou speakest truly, and verily together they led the revels and the fray, and were the first to resist

my authority, to tear up my credentials, and to give us up to the Philistines to be cruelly entreated."

"What more?"

"The young Hugh would have drawn pistol on me but that he had resigned his weapons to some one, while he strove with the arm of flesh with the seller of flesh at Minyeard. He also rolled me in the troubled waters of the brook, until my mortal soul had well-nigh quitted its earthly tabernacle," groaned out the lying bailiff.

"It shall be seen to, it shall be seen to, Master Pri-ver; in insulting thee, they have insulted the parliament. The herd may escape scathless, but the leaders thereof, bulls of Basan as they be, must be made an example to others, that they offend not again."

"Had we not better seize the whelp in his lair as we pass, and before he have notice of our coming and hide himself?"

"Such is my intention; I cross not Grabhurst hill to Cutcombe this night; but will e'en refresh at Ashley Combe and secure the prisoner, and then ride on to Dunster where it shall be proved whether Master Luttrell, the owner of its strong Castle,

will refuse to give hospitality to an officer of the parliament, and to deliver up into his hands the disciple of yon surpliced priest."

"Ahumph!" said Roger Priver, in a sort of grunt, which implied deep-felt satisfaction.

Nothing further was said, until they reached the spot where the road branches off to the Lodge. There, Master Pym ordered all his men but six to proceed to Dunster, with the constables and the prisoners. He kept the bailiff and the preacher with him, intending to supply them with horses from the Lodge stables, and to take them on with him, after he had refreshed his party and secured his prisoner.

In the mean while, Julian Bachell, who, as the reader may remember, had sailed round Bossington Point, with Hugh and the rest, in Giles Tudball's lugger, had arrived at his landing-place, about a quarter of an hour after Master Pym reached Ashley-Combe Lodge.

He stepped lightly ashore, and hurried over the rough stones of the beach towards the wear. Just as he was crossing the wear, a sort of rudely fashioned water-gate, which prevented the tide from

receding from the basin and leaving it dry, he saw some one come out of one of the three fishermen's huts which stood beside it. She, for it was a female, came towards him just as he was quitting the plank which served as a bridge.

"Back, Master Julian, back as you love your liberty," she said in a clear whisper, "enemies are at hand."

"Why, how now pretty Janet, what makes you here after dusk? men must not have aught to say against my foster-sister, and when girls are out, like owls, at twilight, they are apt to gain the name of light o' loves," said Julian, kindly.

"I come, Master Julian," said the gate-keeper's daughter, "by my father's orders, though not unwillingly, for I care not what men say falsely of me, to warn you not to come up to the Lodge to-night."

"And why not? surely my father—"

"He is not yet returned; but there is Master John Pym of Cutcombe, the enemy of all good and true men, up there, with Roger Priver, the preacher, and some troopers. They are searching for

you, and have arrested the servants, and shut up my father in his own gate-house. I made bold to escape by the back window, and, as I knew you had sailed with Master Hugh and would land here, hurried down to warn you."

"Thanks, my good Janet, thanks—but who comes here?"

"A boy, and, as I think, the tapster-boy from the Blue Anchor," said Janet.

"What now boy, whom seek you thus stealthily?"

"An it please your honour, I seek yourself; good Mistress Luckes, whom the troopers are carrying prisoner to Ashley Combe, strapped to her pony, like a basket of chickens or a side of venison, whispered me, while the soldiers and constables took their bearer, to meet you and warn you not to go up to the Lodge to-night, but to put out in a boat and hail Master Jenkins, who will shortly round the headland on his way to Min-yead."

"'Tis well done of Mistress Luckes, and I will not forget to reward her; and now, Janet, do you go back to the Lodge, and secretly warn the serving-

men to offer no resistance, and if possible give my father notice of all that has happened; away my good girl, and good night. The tapster here will go with me, and bring the boat ashore when I am safely seated with Master Jenkins."

Janet tripped off as soon as she had seen Julian launch one of the small boats that lay on the beach, and quickly mounted the steep path: when she gained the Lodge-gate, she looked cautiously round, and listened attentively; neither seeing nor hearing anything to alarm her, she knocked at the door, and whispered through the key-hole to her father, that Master Julian had left Porlock-ward for Minehead. She then with more caution followed the hard road which led up to the Lodge itself, until she came within view of the house. Concealing herself behind a large walnut tree, she endeavoured to see what was going on within. Lights were burning in the great hall, and every now and then a shadow, as of one bearing refreshments, passed over the large window. Creeping behind the evergreens that skirted the circular carriage-road, she sought the stables, where the horses were busily

eating the corn put before them, still saddled, and having their bridles thrown on their necks. Passing at the back of the stables, she gained the offices, and, mounting by a projection in the wall, looked into the large kitchen, where she saw two or three of the women seated and crying by the fire, while others, with the serving-men, were preparing dishes for the men in the hall.

Seeing that no soldiers or strangers were amongst them, Janet tapped smartly at the window, and could not help laughing at the effect produced by "the sound herself had made." The servants set down the dishes they were about to carry in; those who were seated sprung up on their feet, and all, huddled together in the middle of the room, gazed with terror-fraught eyes at the window whence the unexpected sound proceeded.

She tapped again louder than before, and the servants huddled together more closely, clinging to each other for support, until one, bolder than the rest, left the group and approached the window.

"It is I—Janet; do not be afraid, but open the window." The man sprang on a sort of dresser, and

opened the window, or rather four quarries of glass in an iron frame, formed for letting out heat and admitting air.

“ Master Julian hath escaped; his orders are, that no resistance be offered to the intruders, but that they have all that they demand,” said Janet.

“ It needs not Master Julian’s orders to insure that; for the knaves have seized on everything without the asking, and are sitting cheek by jowl, gentle and simple, higglety-pigglety at the same table, eating and drinking as though they meant to pay a reckoning,” said the butler; “ would it might choke them!”

“ Amen !” said every one.

“ And master preacher there read me a lecture, and said a grace of a good ten minutes’ length, and then fell to at trencher and wine-cup, like a crop-eared varlet as he is,” said the house-steward, “ and complained of the claret being over thin, d—n him!”

“ Amen,” said the butler.

“ I will away,” said Janet, “ for fear of discovery, for I would not be taken and shut up before I give

Master Bachell warning of what guests he hath within."

So saying she alighted safely on her feet, and sought by the same hidden track her station behind the walnut tree. She had not remained long, before she saw shadows of the whole company standing up at the raised table, and heard a muttering sound which she doubted not arose from Master Browne saying grace after meat. This lasted some five minutes, and shortly afterwards the horses were brought round, and the company mounted and rode past her, with Master Pym at their head, and the preacher and Roger Priver closing the rear.

Janet, as soon as they were out of hearing, ran down to the Lodge-gate, and found that her father had been released, with strict orders to inform four troopers who had been left within when Master Bachell or his son Julian should arrive.

"I will see them all on the top of Dunkery hill first," said the gate-keeper.

"Or rather at the bottom of its iron mines, father," said Janet, "as being nearer to the place best suited to their puritanical persons."

CHAPTER IX.

MERRY were the crew of the lugger as she sailed before a slight but favouring breeze towards her haven, for they knew nothing of what had occurred since their leaving Culbone Cove. All sat smoking, singing, and talking by turns, and expecting to meet their friends at Minehead. Master Giles Tudball was in the bows conning, and Will Bowering at the tiller, steering and telling marvellous lies at intervals, to the amusement of Hugh de Mohun, the quack-salver, and his man Jansen.

“Come, Master Giles, yonder lights show us the quay of Minehead; we have rounded Greenaleigh Point, and, but that the flat shore forces us to keep rather far out, a short half-hour would see our warps made fast to the pier,” said Hugh.

"We had been there long since, had there been more of a wind," said Giles. "I doubt not but that Master Richard and his wife will have brought themselves to an anchor in their own tap-room ere this, for they have but half our distance to go, and their galloway is fleet."

"Yon lazy lubber at the tiller hath not whistled once for a wind," said Hugh, "for, what with telling lies and puffing forth smoke, his mouth hath had no holiday."

"Foul fall the tale-teller, he was afraid to whistle, Master Hugh, lest his false breath should rouse the grey woman of Minyeard," said Dr. Graveboys.

"Keep thee to thy pills and thy unguents, Master Doctor," replied Will, "I fear Mistress Leckey's wraith less than thou dost the ghosts of those whom thy filthy drugs have laid low in the churchyard."

"Nay then, if that be so, shew thy bravery and whistle now," said the doctor, "louder—louder still, for she may be at Waterford or Lundy Island, and can scarce hear so coward a sound, at so great a distance."

Will, being so near to port, and in company, complied, and sent forth a clear, loud whistle, but the sound had scarcely died away, when a loud flapping as of wings was heard, and the light of Will's pipe, which he had resumed, shewed his face turning ghastly pale.

"D—n—I mean Lord preserve us! it is the grey woman," cried Will.

"Tush man, be not fool and coward to boot," cried his master; "it was but a sea-mew, whom your silly whistle convinced that we had another gull, and that is yourself, on board."

"Never mind," said Hugh, "It will make a proper subject for a new lie when you get on shore; you can swear that you heard her speak in a loud clear tone."

"What ho! lugger ahoy!" shouted a loud deep-toned voice, just as Hugh had done speaking.

"Lord help us!" cried Will, "see what it is to jest with the dead."

"Lugger ahoy! lay to," said the same voice.

"Heaven help us, for nought else can," groaned Will.

"Peace, fool, and down with the helm hard. It is the voice of honest Robert Quirke, and yonder is his boat just ahead of us," said Giles, "what ho! what cheer, messmate?"

"Hold on by the painter, while I step aboard," said Master Quirke, laying his skiff alongside and shipping his sculls. "Now make her fast to the stern, and up with your tiller into mid-channel: Minyeard must not see her Blossom in harbour to-night."

"How so? hath the gauger informed against us?" said Giles.

"The gauger hath not uttered a word that the customs officers might not hear and smile at," said Robert Quirke, "but there be those at Dunster, that might seek at Minyeard certain revellers and such-like, who have set at nought the orders of the parliament, and maltreated its officer in the lanky person of Master Roger Priver."

"And how knowest thou these news?" inquired Hugh de Mohun.

"The warder of the gate wherein Master Snel-ling liveth brought them to me at Minyeard; he came thither to warn the pupil that the tutor was a prisoner on his account."

"And what more said Basil Chipera? said he that Master Thomas Luttrell was returned?" asked Hugh.

"He hath not returned, but is expected home this night. Master Pym hath taken possession of the Castle, under the pretence of asking hospitality for himself and his troopers; and Mistress Luttrell does not dare to say him nay."

"What is your advice in this strait?"

"That you go forward with me to the mouth of the Hone, the Dunster river, where, as you know, I have a store-house on the lower marsh: there I can stow you securely, and the lugger can find safe anchorage; there also will the yatch of Master Luttrell cast anchor, and we can advise him of all that hath happened," said Robert Quirke.

"Thy plan is a good one," said Dr. Graveboys, "but as I fear neither Pym, parliament, nor prosecution, for my license authorizes me to sell my goods any and every where, I will to Minyead in Master Quirke's boat with my man Jansen, and thence to Dunster, whence I will bring such information to you all at Hone-mouth as may be of service, and no one a whit the wiser."

"A blast from my trumpet shall be a hint of friends nigh," said Jansen.

"Nay if thy tin lie on this, as it doth on other occasions, when it proclaims safety to the ailing, it were better it were silent," said Will Bowering.

"It will not turn a sea-mew into a dead woman, or the voice of Master Quirke into a wraith's shriek," said Jansen, as he followed his master over the lugger's side.

The doctor and his servant had not long quitted the vessel, ere another cry of "Lugger ahoy!" was heard.

"Who comes now?" said Hugh.

"Master Jenkins, as you may judge by his Welsh tongue," said Giles Tudball.

"Impossible!" said Hugh, "we left him behind us, and, as he has but a pair of sculls and a small square sail, it is not likely he can have come up with the swiftest boat in the Channel."

"Nay, you forget that she draws less water, and can creep close in shore, while we have been forced to keep a good offing, and that, with a wind astern, a square sail will carry such a cockle-shell as that before it, nine knots good."

"Who hath he on board with him?" asked Robert Quirke, "for I see one in the stern-sheets."

"Master Richard Luckes or the bully butcher mayhap," said Giles.

"It is I—Julian Bachell; is Hugh de Mohun still on board?"

Hugh stepped to the side, and in a few minutes shook hands with his friend as he leapt aboard. Julian as briefly as possible recounted to him all that had taken place since he quitted them. The boat of Master Jenkins was towed astern, and all the party agreed to go to the Hone's mouth and remain there until morning, as Master Jenkins did not fail to add to Julian's story an alarming account of the proceedings of Pym and his followers at Culbone.

The lugger's head was brought round and put up Channel. The wind began to increase so much, that before they reached the place of their destination it blew half a gale, and they were obliged to take in a double reef of all the sails. Will Bowering could not help asserting that they should have a storm for having insulted the grey-woman of Minyead, who was not to be summoned

with impunity. The crew laughed at his fears—all but one, and that was Master Robert Quirke, who, as the reader knows, fancied he had sound reasons for dreading the old woman's powers. They arrived however, before the storm, which shortly followed, gained its height, and came to anchor in the Hone's mouth. After making everything snug on board, they reached the store-house, and found a comfortable shelter from the rain which began to fall heavily.

In the mean while, Dr. Graveboys and his man landed at Minehead, and having taken some refreshment at the Ship Aground, as an excuse for informing the harbour-master of the arrest of his son and Mistress Richard, left the quay, and went through the upper town and the little village of Alcombe to the town of Dunster.

The distance was about two miles and a half, and the doctor and Jansen were, from much practice, good and fast walkers; but, before they reached the base of Conygar hill, which impends over the town, the storm had commenced, and Jansen found his box of drugs a troublesome appendage to his shoulders.

"I would, master mine, that we had left this pack of thine at the Plume of Feathers, in Minyeard, for the wind acts upon it like the sails of the lugger, and I have already made three such lurches to leeward as well-nigh brought me up all standing in yon ditch," said Jansen.

"What! leave my medicaments, the tools of my trade, behind me? never! who knows but that they may have been at cut and thrust up at Dunster, and that my unguents and healing balsams may be in requisition; and, as for the wind, it is behind us, and when we have rounded Conygar we shall be in shelter."

"Well, at any rate, it is better to be here on hard ground, than out in the Channel on such an evening," said Jansen. "Giles Tudball, I trust, is by this time in harbour."

"Ay, that he is; for, with such a merry breeze astern, his lively bark would not be long running into Blue Anchor Bay, especially as it is high tide, and he can keep close in shore. It is not a desirable night for Channel sailing truly, and yet one is there, with wind and tide against him, unless he be already arrived," said the doctor.

"And who may that be?" asked Jansen.

"The good owner of yonder noble Castle, Master Luttrell, who was to sail from Clevedon this day with his fair ward: God preserve them both!"

"Who is this fair ward, of whom men speak so praisingly?"

"Mistress Prudence Everard, the orphan child of the last of the Everards of Luxborough, whom he left when on his death-bed to the care and protection of his oldest friend, Master Thomas Luttrell. She hath just completed her studies in some house near the College in Bristol, and was to give him the meeting at Clevedon this day, to be conveyed to Dunster Castle, which is henceforth to be her home."

The doctor was interrupted in his speech by a vivid flash of lightning, followed by a loud thunder-clap, and such a dash of rain as made both him and Jansen set off at the top of their speed, which they did not relax until they found shelter in the Luttrell Arms, the principal hostelry in the town.

Without stopping to dry his clothes, the doctor,

bidding Jansen remain within, sought the gateway of the Castle by the open road, but seeing, by the gleam of a flash of lightning, one of the troopers posted there as a sentry, he returned down the road, and sought to approach the gateway by a secret path that led round the foot of the hill through bushes and briars.

Through this path the doctor with difficulty found his way, and reached, by means of the ivy, the window out of which Basil Chipera had made his escape, and which belonged to the room occupied as a sleeping apartment by Hugh de Mohun. At this window, into which he was rather too stout to creep, as it was barred, but not closely, the doctor shouted, well knowing that the wind which was roaring round the gateway would prevent the sentinel hearing him on the further side. His shouts soon brought to him Basil Chipera, who could only tell him that Master Pym and his men were in the Castle, and that the parson was with Mistress Luttrell, (considered as under arrest,) endeavouring to calm her apprehensions for her husband's safety. Master Roger Priver was also in

the Castle, reducing to writing the information he had furnished against Hugh de Mohun and Julian Bachell. Those who had been arrested were now confined in the keep. Master Robert Browne was acting as *Prive rs amanuensis*.

When he had acquired all the information he could from Basil Chpera, the doctor returned by the same path to the Luttrell Arms. He was now thoroughly soaked by the rain and the droppings from the shrubs and bushes; nevertheless, he announced to Jansen his intention of leaving him there, while he went down to the stores of Master Robert Quirke, to explain the state of things at Dunster Castle to those there assembled, and to ascertain whether the yacht, a little cutter of some thirty tons, had yet arrived.

“Not so, master mine;” said Jansen, “if you go, I go. Like master like man; or if you will stay here and dry your garments, I, who am parcel-dry, and somewhat cheered by a jack of ale, slightly spiced, will borrow a wrapper of good Dunster broad-cloth from mine host, and seek Master Quirke’s store, and be back again speedily.”

"Not so, good Jansen, I must e'en go, if it be but to retrieve mine honour, having pledged it to that effect."

"Then will I go with you, for it never shall be said, that a drop of rain and a gleam of lightning drove Jansen from his master's side. But you will take a cup of what our host holds better than all our specifics, a spiced cup of ale?"

The doctor consented, and, having finished the pottle, set out with his man, leaving his box of drugs in the care of the host.

The road to the marshes lay by the side of the river, which, though but a small stream at Dunster, grows gradually wider and deeper as it nears the Channel. It was famed in those days for its trout and salmon, which were taken in great numbers at certain seasons by means of stake or tide-nets. The ground on either side of it is wet and swampy, as it is liable to be flooded at every spring-tide. To enable persons to reach the mouth of it in safety, a sort of path, or *hard*, as it is termed, had been made of the shingles and rough stones obtained from Watchet.

Along this hard, the doctor and his man proceeded with very great difficulty, for, although the moon was at the full, and it was not yet late, the darkness was intense, and the rain drove heavily in their faces; the wind too was still powerful, and almost lifted them from their legs. They pressed on however, having a glimpse of their road from the frequent flashes of lightning, and, after much exertion, reached the storehouse of Master Quirke, and made their coming known by a blast from Jansen's horn, though it could scarcely be heard amidst the din of the thunder.

Within, they found very comfortable quarters, for Master Quirke had lighted a large fire, and had set out a substitute for a table, on which were heaped such viands as Master Jenkins had been enabled to rescue from the stores of Richard Luckes's booth. and certain supplies of spirits which the world said were always to be had in plenty in the storehouse, which was supposed to contain provisions and other goods that formed the freights of its owner.

The party within were all very merry except Will Bowering, who still believed that he had caused the

storm which was raging without, by exciting the wrath of the grey woman of Minehead. He was calming his fears as he best might, by copious libations, between which he muttered all the prayers he knew by heart, to deprecate the anger of the departed lady.

Doctor Graveboys and Jansen changed their wet suits for others furnished them by the owner of the stores, and then sat down and communicated to their friends all that they had heard at Dunster.

"I see nothing that need alarm us for those in the Castle," said Hugh de Mohun. "Master Pym, sour puritan though he be, will offer no insult, nor allow any to be offered, to Mistress Luttrell or Master Snelling. That crop-eared rogue, Roger Priver, may tell his lies an he list, and Master Browne write them down; but, if there be justice and justices in the land, we will defeat their measures."

"As to justice in these days," said Julian Bachell, "we must not expect it, for even King Charles, God bless him! cannot obtain it. I am the more alarmed however, for the safety of Master Luttrell than for that of his lady."

"Fear not for him Master Bachell, he is used to the Channel, and, rely upon it, he hath, when he saw the storm brooding, run into Weston-upon-the-Sea, or into Watchet," said Giles Tudball.

"Hark!" cried Will Bowering as he sprang to his feet; "hark, I say—heard ye not a cry as of one in danger?"

All listened, but nothing was heard save the roar of the wind and the rumbling of the thunder.

"Will hath not got over his fears of the grey woman yet, though he be safe housed ashore," said Giles.

Will stood pale and trembling, and could not join in the laugh that was going round at his expense.

"I'll swear that I heard a cry," said he, "between the thunder-claps, and hark! by heavens! I hear it now; be it Mother Leckey, or the devil's dam, or the devil himself, I will see what it means."

Will rushed towards the door, but Jansen threw himself in his way, telling him not to make a laughing-stock of himself by his folly. Will however flung him aside, as if he had been a mere infant in

his powerful grasp, and threw open the door. All the party sprung to their feet, for, amidst the noise of the elements, the cries of human beings in distress reached their ears.

"The squire of Dunster Castle!" cried Hugh de Mohun; "it must be he, and in danger. Lanterns Giles, lanterns, thou hast plenty at hand; I will forth; and do you all follow, but Jansen, who shall throw all this dry wood in a heap without, and set light to it to serve as a beacon to show them friends are nigh."

So saying, Hugh, followed by Julian, rushed out, and a scene presented itself to their eyes, which shewed that his conjectures had not been unfounded.

CHAPTER X.

THE shore about Blue-Anchor Bay is very flat, and although, at high water, a vessel of much larger size than the cutter belonging to Dunster Castle could sail up the channel formed by the Hone with ease and in safety ; yet the slightest deviation from the straight course, on entering the river's mouth, would be sure to be attended with disastrous consequences.

When Hugh de Mohun and his friends left the storehouse, they could distinctly hear cries for assistance, but so intense was the darkness that they could see nothing, until a vivid and prolonged flash of lightning shewed them a small vessel, cutter-rigged, lying on her side near the mouth of the river, about sixty yards below where they were

standing. The wind, which was blowing strongly up Channel, dashed the waves over her, and seemed at times completely to overwhelm her! the crew were in the rigging, and a second flash of lightning discovered to those on shore the figures of a man and woman standing on the after-deck, apparently lashed to the guy-rope.

"God help them!" cried Julian Bachell, "for the cutter will go to pieces before we can reach them."

"Not so," cried Giles, "she is on the sands and will hold together yet; now steady all, and listen to me. Master Jenkins, do you get your boat ready; Will, bring you a coil of rope, make fast one end to our warp, and put the coil in the boat. I and Master Jenkins, will pull off to the cutter, and when all are in the boat, a tug on the rope shall be your signal to haul us ashore."

"No small boat can live in such a sea as this I fear, and the tide is still running up," said Hugh.

"We will try however," said Giles, as he leapt into the boat with the Welshman; a few smart strokes of the sculls sent the little boat into mid-

stream, and they could at intervals see her struggling with the tide by the blaze of the signal fire, which had been lighted by Jansen and was now burning fiercely: when she had got about half the distance from the shore to the cutter, a wave took her, and she disappeared from view.

"I feared 'twould be so; the boat, our only hope is gone down, and Giles Tudball—"

"Fear not for him or the Welshman, Master Bachell, they swim like seabirds, and the tide will soon bring them ashore; see yonder they are, struggling manfully toward us; heap up the fire Jansen, for we must recover the boat when she drifts ashore if we can see her," shouted Will.

As soon as he had seen Giles and Master Jenkins safely landed, Hugh de Mohun went into the storehouse, and, aided by the doctor, ridded himself of his boots and loose jacket and petticoat; he deposited his pistols on the table, and returned to the party outside.

"Haul in the rope, Master Giles, and make one end fast to me. I will swim on board the cutter, and, by means of the rope, haul a hawser on board her, and then escape is easy and certain."

"Nay, nay, Master Hugh, you go not to risk your life ; the plan is a good one, and *I* will carry it out," said Giles.

"Fear not for me, Giles, thou knowest I can swim bravely," said Hugh, seizing the end of the rope, and looping it tightly over his shoulders : "I shall not take water here, but go down as far as the rope will let me, and so get the tide-stream in my favour—do you get ready to make fast the hawser, as soon as you see me on board."

Hugh ran down beside the stream for some hundred yards, which brought him opposite to the cutter, but a little below her. There he fearlessly plunged into the waves, and was seen buffeting them with his powerful arms. Julian and the Mediciner looked on in silence ; Giles Tudball and the Welshman were busied preparing a strong cable-rope, which Will had got ready ; and Jansen was busily employed feeding the fire with dry wood, which, being saturated with pitch and tar, burnt brightly in spite of the rain that continued to fall.

In a few minutes, which seemed hours to Julian and Graveboys, Hugh de Mohun was seen clinging to the cutter's man-rope ; a loud shout proclaimed

his success, and in another second he was on board her, and, with the crew, employed in hauling in the cable from the shore ; a few minutes sufficed to make it fast.

"Bravely done and well!" said Giles Tudball, "had we but the boat now, Master Jenkins, all should be safe on shore in a few seconds : as it is we must trust to those on board to see to their safe passage."

"Look yonder," said Julian, "if my eyes deceive me not, we shall not risk the lives of Master Luttrell and his fair ward for the want of a boat."

"True enough ; there floats my little skiff, keel upwards ; a short swim shall soon enable me to renew my acquaintance with her," said Master Jenkins, as he waded out into the surf, and succeeded with little difficulty in drawing the boat towards the land, where, with the assistance of the others, she was drawn on shore, emptied of the water and launched again. The skulls could not be seen, but the owner and Giles Tudball drew her down to the spot where the hawser was made fast, and getting into her, made for the cutter by pulling hand over hand on the

cable, which was drawn taught from the shore to the ship.

It was a work of some difficulty to gain the ship's side, as the waves ran so high, that the little boat was frequently nearly overset, and Giles and his companion, though holding on "like grim death," were nearly washed from their places by the surges that burst over them. Skilful and courageous, they held boldly on, and gained the cutter's side. Master Luttrell stepped in, assisted by Hugh de Mohun, and Prudence Everard, whom Hugh had fastened to his left arm by a handkerchief passed round her right wrist for fear of accident, timidly essayed to follow her guardian. Twice she made the attempt, but her courage failed her just as she touched the boat's side. Hugh placed his right hand round her waist, and sprung lightly into the skiff, but at that instant a mighty wave caused the boat to surge, and he and Prudence were thrown into the raging waters.

A shriek of agony passed the lips of Master Luttrell, and he would have sprung into the tide after his ward, had not Giles and Master Jenkins held

him back, assuring him that he need fear nought, as the young de Mohun would safely convey his companion to shore.

These assurances seemed likely to be realized, for Hugh was holding his left hand aloft, with Prudence firmly bound to it, and breasting the waves, as he struggled manfully to land, with his right hand. Julian Bachell rushed into the stream as they neared the shore, and assisted them to land. The poor girl, who was half drowned by the water she had swallowed, and exhausted by the previous events of the evening, fell at Hugh's feet deprived of sense and motion.

He bade Julian unfasten the handkerchief that had bound them, and, when it was done, raised her in his arms and conveyed her carefully into the storehouse, where he laid her before the fire, chafed her cold hands, and poured a small portion of brandy into her mouth. Doctor Graveboys took a small phial from the pocket of his still dripping jerkin, and, applying it to her nostrils, in a few minutes she opened her eyes, and saw her guardian and all the party, including the crew of the cutter,

standing gazing upon her. She cast a look of love upon her friend, of gratitude on her preserver, closed her eyes again, and burst out in a fit of hysterical crying."

Dr. Graveboys poured a few drops of the contents of his phial into a cup of water, and, stooping over her, contrived with Hugh's assistance to make her swallow a portion of it. It had a surprising effect, for in a few minutes the sobbing ceased, she opened her eyes again, and raised herself from Hugh's breast, on the which she had been reclining.

Master Luttrell lifted her from the ground and placed her on a seat, supporting her in his arms, and blessing God for having rescued her from a watery grave.

"And to you, my young friend, next to Him, are we indebted for our lives; trust me I shall never forget your conduct on this day. To you too, Giles Tudball and Master Jenkins, I stand deeply indebted, and will not forget to do my best to pay the debt. Master Julian Bachell, Prudence Everard thanks you for your aid; and Dr. Graveboys shall not want a friend henceforth, for the

kindly part which he hath taken in restoring to me her who is to me as a daughter."

Hugh, Julian, and the rest, declared that all their exertions were repaid and their dangers compensated by the safety of Master Luttrell and his fair ward.

"Nor must I forget to thank Master Bowering and Jansen there, whose friendly beacon first gave us hopes of rescue, and enabled us to see the exertions which our friends were making for our safety."

Will made a low bow, and went out with Jansen to secure the boat. Hugh de Mohun inquired of the captain of the cutter how it was that he had contrived to get her aground.

"Why, you see, sir, when I saw the storm a-brewing, my advice was to run for Weston, and take shelter at Uphill; but Master Luttrell said me nay, and I was forced, against my will, to make the best of my way against a strong tide and a head-wind, which nearly drove us ashore on the Steep Holms. I kept on however, and, deceived by the light from the windows of this storehouse, which I mistook for the light on the pier at Minyead,

whither I thought we were running, for I was confounded by the storm that raged, bump I came aground, and, but for your aid, might have passed the night in no pleasant situation, even if the cutter had not gone to pieces."

Master Luttrell, who had been leaning over Prudence Everard and anxiously inquiring into her feelings, finding that, beyond the excitement and the fears she had undergone, there was but little to dread, except the consequences that might follow from her being unable to exchange her dripping garments for dry ones, turned to Hugh de Mohun, and inquired of him the cause of their being at the storehouse.

Hugh de Mohun and Julian Bachell briefly recounted the events of the day, and Doctor Graveboys told him of the state of things at the Castle.

"Master Pym," said he, "is welcome to the use of my poor apartments, and to such hospitality as the Castle affords; for, though a fanatic and a disloyal person, he is still a gentleman; but Master Roger Priver and Master Browne, who have made enemies of friends, and sown dissension in

families where love only reigned before, shall troop with the troopers, or my name be not Luttrell. So, on for Dunster, for these dripping garments will do no good to this maiden's delicate frame, and Mistress Luttrell will be anxious and alarmed for the safety of her eldest child, as she calls her. You, Master Hugh de Mohun, may safely take up your residence with me to-night, and invite your friend Julian Bachell to do the same, for I will be bail with Master John Pym for your appearing to account for your boyish frolics. You, Master Giles Tudball and the rest of you, shall be under my protection at the Luttrell Arms in Dunster, where there be loyal men enough to see that a king's justice be not wronged by these new officers, unlawfully appointed by the parliament without the royal authority ;—so forward for Dunster."

Hugh, who had been employed in resuming his large boots and the remainder of his dress, ventured to suggest that they should remain where they were, until the storm was abated ; but Master Luttrell, deeming it better for Prudence and all of them that they should brave the storm and so get

to the Castle, where they might retire to rest at once, would not yield to his suggestions. Just at that moment, too, Will Bowering came in and said that the storm had suddenly ceased, and added with an oath that he had heard a shrill voice in angry tones cry out, "Saved! saved! saved!" which he did not doubt proceeded from the grey woman of Minyeard, who was incensed at having lost her prey. He called upon Jansen to confirm his statement, but the Merry Andrew declared that all he had heard was the cry of some waterfowl, as they flew over to the neighbouring marshes for their nightly shelter. He added however, that the storm had passed on to the eastward, and that the moon was making her light visible.

The fires were carefully extinguished, and Prudence, covered with a thick warm boat-cloak, was conducted along the hard pathway supported on one side by her guardian and on the other by Hugh de Mohun, to whom she did not fail to pour forth her thanks for his gallant conduct towards her.

"He hath acted a noble part, Prudence, and deserves our gratitude, which shall be shown in deeds

rather than words. You, who have talents in limning, shall paint a picture of your rescue, and I will take care that it shall be preserved as an heir-loom in my family ; thus shall we immortalise the courage of Hugh and your talents in the art of painting, at the same time," said Master Luttrell.

"I fear me I shall not do justice to my subject," said Prudence, "for, with all a woman's fear, I closed my eyes that I might not see my danger, and heard only the assurances of my safety whispered by my preserver, amidst the roaring of the waves and the howling of the storm."

"Imagination will supply materials, and to-morrow, when all is calm, we will visit the scene of our disasters and see to the condition of our little bark," said Master Luttrell, as he hurried his ward with rapid steps towards the Castle.

Hugh de Mohun was too happy to talk ; he felt that he had probably saved the life of the fair girl who leaned on his arm and of her guardian, for whom he had long entertained a high regard ; nor was his happiness a little enhanced by the idea, that he should be enabled to form a more in-

These thoughts kept Hugh silent, and she had enough to occupy her mind, as the Master of Dunster Castle was pondering on what had taken place within his walls, no further discussion ensued until they reached the small, long, low-fronted building called the Armoury, which was situated near to the top of the steep road leading up to the gateway. Here they parted with Giles Tudball and his friends, except Julian Bachell, who accompanied them and proceeded with them to the Castle.

The gateway of Dunster Castle consisted of a large square tower, battlemented and flanked by two turrets at each corner. Its ponderous gate had been closed for years, as, during the peace of Elizabeth and the first James, nothing had occurred to render such a proceeding neces-

not engaged in his business, or in his duty as clerk of the parish, in gardening and in cultivating a fine lemon-tree, which grew against the south walls near the Castle-windows, and was the object of his constant care and regard.

The lower part contained two rooms, in which Basil Chipera lived and slept; above them were three other rooms, where Master Robert Snelling and his pupil had their habitation. They wanted no culinary offices, for they either took their meals in the hall, where the parson officiated as chaplain, or were supplied with what they required from the kitchen and buttery.

When Master Luttrell drew nigh to the tower, he was surprised to find the gates closed, and a sentinel, with his pike shouldered, marching up and down before them.

"What ho! sir trooper! are we living in warlike times, that my Castle is thus furnished, and closed against its rightful owner? Open, and let me pass."

"It is against my orders to let any one in without Master Pym's leave given," replied the man in a surly tone, and without stopping in his walk.

"Open to me sirrah, I am the master here; I am Thomas Luttrell."

"An thou wert the Speaker himself, with his Commons at his heels, I would not open to you without the orders of my commander, John Pym of Cutcombe," replied the man.

Hugh de Mohun dropped the arm that still rested on his, and, backed by Julian Bachell, stepped up to the trooper and bade him stand aside on peril of life, at the same time presenting at his head one of the pistols which he wore in his belt. Master Luttrell, however, bade him use no violence, but ring the large bell which was used as a summons to meals.

Julian obeyed, and rang a peal which quickly produced another trooper, who, upon hearing the names of those who demanded entrance, opened the wicket-door and admitted them; and, by the light of a torch which he carried, conducted them respectfully through the outer court to the inhabited part of the Castle.

CHAPTER XI.

MASTER Thomas Luttrell was ushered by the trooper into the hall of the Castle : Prudence Everard hung upon his arm, and Hugh de Mohun and Julian Bachell, followed in the rear. At the upper end of the hall, at the raised table where the family and their guests took their meals, while the inferior members of the household, the servants and retainers, sat at the tables below, was seated Master John Pym ; by his side sat Master Robert Browne, busily employed in writing ; and on the other side of him stood Roger Priver : the constables of Dunster, forming the bailiff's posse comitatus, were seated near the great fire-place, and with them some half-dozen soldiers.

The trooper, who had preceded the owner of the Castle, announced his presence, and Master Pym

liament officer, and shewed it in all its sourness. He removed his steeple-crown when he saw that a lady was leaning on Luttrell's arm, and made a low obeisance without uttering a word.

I would beg you, Master Pym, as you presumed the mastery here, to summon female domestics, that Mistress Prudence who hath been exposed to the storm this way that may prove injurious to her delicacy may speedily seek the repose she needs placed under the protection of her whether a mother's part."

"Master Luttrell, I was not with you much less with Prudence Everard, the daughter of my late near neighbour of Luxborough were not friends was not from any fault of her own."

oppose. Mistress Everard, I pray thee to retire; I have business with Master Luttrell and these youths. Mauworth, conduct the lady to Mistress Luttrell."

The same trooper, who had ushered the party into the hall, took a light from one of the sconces, and, after Prudence had bidden good night to her friends, preceded her to the apartments occupied by Mistress Luttrell and Master Snelling, who received her with joy, and heard the account of her escape from danger with heartfelt 'gratitude. She then retired to rest, after partaking of a warm draught, which in those days was considered as a certain preventive of the ills ensuing from wetted garments and exposure to the night air.

But we must return to the hall.

"I marvel greatly, Master Pym," said the owner of Dunster Castle, "that, having taken possession, and I trust, been treated with all due hospitality, you should have deemed it necessary to place a guard at my gates, to make my servants prisoners, and to refuse admittance to myself and my friends."

"I regret that it has been my unpleasant duty to act as I have done, Master Luttrell, but I act upon due authority," said Pym.

"Have you the king's warrant for your acts?"

"Tush, tush, Master Luttrell, I have the warrant of those whose authority is superior to that of Charles Stuart : the times are licentious, and require a stronger curb than he, who supports Laud, him of Canterbury I mean, is likely to put upon them. I have the Speaker's warrant to put an end to revels, junketings and such like sports, which were legalized by the father of your Charles Stuart, because they savoured of the holiday games encouraged in the times of prelacy and popery. I sent a copy of the orders of the parliament to you, amongst others, Master Luttrell, and I find that one of your household, Master Hugh de Mohun there, was amongst the first to promote the revels and ale-drinkings at Culbone, to resist the authority of the parliament, and to maltreat and misuse its subordinate officer, Master Roger Priver, whose warrant to execute the office of high bailiff, of which you unjustly deprived him, he hath torn into

shreds and trodden under foot. 'Shall I not visit for these things?'"

"Master Pym, I am a peaceable and a quiet man, and I will not argue with such as thou about the proceedings of those who, though the lowest estate of the realm, seem to me to wish to assume the entire power, and to put down the monarchy. I will only say, in my defence, that I received not a copy of the warrant to which you refer, for I was away late last evening to take charge of my ward at Clevedon, and, as thou knowest, am but now returned: in the next place, I deny that Hugh de Mohun—"

"The descendant doubtless of the Mohuns, who whilome held Dunster and many estates around it, and were zealous papists?" said Pym.

"I deny, I say, that Hugh de Mohun is one of my household: he sojourneth for a space with Master Robert Snelling, to be perfected in his humanities, before he goeth to Oxford to complete his education," said Master Luttrell, taking no notice of the interrogatory with which Pym had endeavoured to interrupt his statement.

"Master Robert Snelling forsooth! him whom men call the parson of Dunster?"

"Yea, and who hath driven me from my freehold, and from my flock, instigated thereto and supported by the Master of Dunster Castle, who calleth himself patron of the incumbency. How long, how long, O Lord?" shouted the deposed divine.

"Silence, good Master Browne, and let me hear what excuses the pupil of the malignant hath to offer," said Pym.

"I deny the truth of your assertions," said Hugh, "I went to the revels as to a mere holiday, and to keep my word with one who had challenged me to a trial of strength. I neither interfered with Roger Priver in the execution of his duty, nor did I destroy his warrant."

"He did both, and moreover did submerge me in the brook," cried the bailiff.

"Thou hast sworn to it," said Pym.

"He lies in his teeth," said Hugh, "I did all in my power to protect him and his followers there, as my friend Julian Bachell can testify."

"Master Julian Bachell will have employment

enough to defend himself," said Pym, "for Roger Pri-ver hath put his hand to written testimony, where-in he asserts, and hath proved to demonstration, that he aided and abetted thee in the riots at Culbone; and his father, who will not deny that he received my warrant and the proclamation, shall suffer the penalties of his disobedience to the parliament."

"Punish me an you will, Master Pym, but trust the word of one who never willingly spoke an untruth—my father knew not of my going to Culbone."

"It was by my fault and at my solicitations that he went," said Hugh; "let the blame fall on me. His father knew not of his going."

"Yet he read over to his father both the war-rant and the proclamation before he went—I am advised of that—and the old malignant, who boasts himself on his loyalty, as he calls his prejudices for Charles Stuart, went wide of home, lest he should be called upon to suppress the devil's games."

"Master Pym," said Julian, "you are an old man and I but a youth, or I would thrust your abuse of my father down your throat with my staff here."

"Nay, be not rash," said Master Luttrell, "Master Pym cannot but speak in the language of his party, which partaketh of the coarseness of the followers by whom they are supported."

"Master Roger Priver, summon your constables, and, in your office of high bailiff, take me into custody these hot-headed youths," said Pym.

"He is no longer high bailiff; as a magistrate, armed with the king's authority, and lord of this manor, I have deprived him of the office, for his illegal support of yon deposed priest," said Master Luttrell.

"Which the parliament, at my instigation, have restored to him," said Pym.

"Let him shew his warrant of authority," said Hugh de Mohun.

"Thou did'st tear it into shreds,"—said Roger Priver.

"Thou liest, wool-comber," said Hugh.

"It was violently taken from me, and destroyed by the flesh-seller, and thou, like to Saul of old, did'st stand by and consentedst," said the bailiff.

Seize on them, Master Priver, and I will be thy authority," said Pym.

Roger Priver took seven solemn steps towards the young men, and beckoned to his followers to support him. When he saw that they were drawn up in order behind him, he took another step in advance, and offered to seize Julian Bachell who stood nearest to him. Julian however, stepped back, and with the beating-pole, which he still carried in his character of an Exmoor forester, dealt the bailiff such a blow on the side of his head as laid him prostrate on the hall-floor.

"He hath resisted the parliament," cried Pym, drawing his rapier, "his blood be upon him."

Master Luttrell, though a peaceable man, drew in defence of his young friend, but, before he had crossed blades with Pym, Hugh de Mohun threw himself between them, and, drawing both his pistols, put one into the hands of Julian, and presented the other at the leader of the assailants. Pym dropped his point, and the constables, with the soldiers, who were merely militia-men and as yet unused to fighting, drew back while Master Priver scrambled up upon his legs.

"I warn thee, Master Luttrell," said Pym, "that

I act upon authority in arresting these youths, and, if any resistance be made, you will be held accountable."

"I am in my own house, Master Pym, and it never shall be said that, while I am owner of it, this Castle allowed its guests to be betrayed. You have taken possession, but shall not keep it, if my blade hold good—so stand aside, Hugh de Mohun, and let me not in ridding my Castle of an unwelcome intruder, and the country of a pestilent round-head," cried Master Luttrell, as he thrust aside his young friend, and made a push at Pym.

"Use not the carnal weapon—use not the carnal weapon; but order the men of war to seize upon them," shouted Master Browne.

"Thou art right—I will not imbrue my hands with his blood. Mauworth bring up your men, and seize them all," said Pym.

"Hark, my men," said Hugh, "these pistols are but small, but they will do their duty—pause, and settle among yourselves which two of you shall fall, before you attempt to execute the orders of yon disloyal man."

The men fell back, and a pause took place. Pym,

Roger Priver, and the divine, consulted together, while Master Luttrell and the two young men retreated backward, keeping a firm front to the enemy, until they reached the screen of dark-oak which ran across the hall near the entrance. Here they placed their backs against the wainscot, and prepared to defend themselves against all attacks.

The conference between Pym and his allies lasted for some few minutes: Pym then stepped forward and said, "A truce with this folly, Master Luttrell, we have odds in our favour. Lay down your arms, and throw yourself on our merciful consideration: leave those young men to the fate their folly deserves."

"Never, Master Pym; so do your worst," said Master Luttrell.

"Bailiff do your duty—constables and soldiers support the officer," cried Pym.

Roger Priver, who had resumed his pike and put on his skull-cap, brought his weapon to the charge and advanced upon the three, followed by his men and the soldiers. The click of the pistols was heard, as Julian and his friend brought them to the full cock, and blood would certainly have been shed

and lives lost, for Hugh never missed his mark, and Julian was but little inferior to him in the use of his weapon, had not the hall-door been flung open, and Mistress Luttrell, accompanied by Master Robert Snelling, and followed by Basil Chipera and a large body of the Castle servants, entered.

"How now?" shouted Pym. "Sergeant Mauworth, did'st thou not confine yonder men as thou wast bidden?"

"I did as I was commanded, and secured them all," said the sergeant.

"Ay, but though doors be locked and windows barred, there be those that can find means of escape," said Basil Chipera; "and, while Dunster owns a smith and he can be smuggled into these walls, its lawful servants are not to be kept in captivity while its master is being murdered."

"What means this usage, Master Pym?" said Mistress Luttrell, advancing before the rest.

"It is the priest, mine enemy!" cried out Master Browne, as he saw Master Snelling come forward with the lady; "smite him hip and thigh."

"Silence preacher," said the lady, "I would

ask Master Pym why he, having received all due hospitality at our hands, repays it by threatening the lives and liberty of the owner of this Castle and his friends."

"Madam," said Pym, "I had nought against your husband; but Hugh de Mohun and Julian Bachell are proved on oath to have rendered themselves amenable to the laws, as has Master Luttrell, now that he hath aided in their rescue from those who have authority to arrest them."

"I deny that authority," said Master Luttrell.

"And I—and I too," added the young men.

"Master Pym," said Snelling, "you have, as I believe treated me in an unlawful manner, for which I might have my remedy hereafter; but I will forego all further thoughts of retaliation, if you will but listen to reason, and withdraw from the Castle with your forces."

"Hew him down!" shouted Master Browne.

"You see that the servants are armed," continued the parson, not heeding the preacher, "and fully equal to your force. The alarm hath been given in the town of Dunster, and ere many minutes

elapse, the loyal people of the place will be within the gates, ready to defend one whom they justly love and esteem. I would save bloodshed, Master Pym; so, with the permission of the good Master Luttrell here, I beg you to vacate."

"Peace, surpliced knave!" said Pym, "and let me speak with your betters."

"Nay, I intreat you, use fair words, Master Pym; the priest acts on my authority," said Mistress Luttrell.

"I crave your pardon, lady; I knew it not," said Pym, sheathing his sword, and bidding his men ground their pikes, which Roger Priver was the last to obey. "I would speak with Master Luttrell."

"Say on then, but be concise, or I will not answer for the consequences, if the men of Dunster find you here, and know that you have threatened my life," said Thomas Luttrell.

"Wilt thou pledge me thine honor to appear before me when called upon, and to produce these two young men also?"

"I will, if thou wilt shew me an authority from King Charles, but not else. Your warrant being

signed by the parliament only, I consider illegal, and will not obey it."

"Long live King Charles, and down with the parliament!" shouted the servants, headed by Basil Chipera.

"Circumstances are against me," said Pym, "but as sure as there is a power above the king's, thou shalt pay for this, Master Luttrell."

"Nay threaten not, but save thyself and thy men, while yet you may; stand aside there Basil Chipera, and let these men pass, take sufficient force with you, and see them safely outside the gates with their horses and arms, and then make all fast for the night. Master Pym, I bid thee farewell, and trust your next visit to Dunster Castle may be of such a nature as not to force me to be but a churl in my house. Master Priver, see that thou act not without better authority than that thou has acted on this day; and you, Master Robert Browne, practise more and preach less, lest your strange doctrines get you into further trouble. You, soldiers and constables, be peaceable and orderly, and provoke not the townsmen, lest they

on his forty nat, and passed out of the
ed by Roger Priver, who dashed his
pavement with a loud "ahumph" of
the preacher, who looked at Snelling :
and muttered something about "the :
of the land;" and by the constables a
who seemed very glad to have the
of avoiding a struggle with the serv
Castle.

Hugh de Mohun and Julian Bach
Basil Chipera in clearing the Castle ; and
had seen the gates securely fastened,
freshment and rest, which they greatly
ter all the events of a day so fruitful
and adventure.

CHAPTER XII.

WHEN Pym, followed by his troopers, mounted like himself, and by Roger Priver and his men on foot, left the gateway of Dunster Castle, and rode slowly down the steep descent, everything in the town below seemed quiet and tranquil. A light gleamed here and there from a latticed window, and a lamp, which indicated the hostelry, gave forth its feeble rays, scarcely serving to shew the market-house, a small octagonal building, open below its slated roof, which stood exactly facing it. The hill called Conygar, which impended over Dunster on the opposite side to the Castle, looked like a huge black mass from the thickly planted Scotch firs which lined its sides.

“Where be these men of Belial, with whose loyalty

and zeal in the defence of their lord, Bastl Chipera did threaten us?" asked Master Browne of Roger Priver, by whose side he marched.

"The muddlepates are doubtless sleeping off the effects of the ale they have absorbed since their return from the ungodly revellings, in drinking health to the King and confusion to the Parliament. They are wont to be more valiant over their cups than in the fray, and to shew their loyalty in words rather than in deeds. I would that my pike were better acquainted with their flesh than it is likely to be this night; but vengeance is mine, and I will repay the scurvy usage of this day at some future time; let them look to it," said Roger Priver.

"Silence, silence, there, bailiff! and you good master preacher, be silent," said Pym. "The law is powerful enough, in our hands, to compensate you for any ill-treatment you may have experienced in the execution of its orders."

"But I have been buffeted and well-nigh drowned, deprived of my warrant of authority, and made a mark for the finger of scorn to point at," said the wool-comber.

"Yea, he speaketh but the truth, and I, a minister of the gospel, have been treated as the very scorn of men," added Browne.

"All which shall be set right in due season," said Pym; to which assurance the only reply was a deep groan from the offended dignitary and the preacher. The latter added his favourite cry undertribulation—"How Long? oh Lord! how long?" at which the constables and troopers uttered a nasal grunt by way of chorus.

"As I have been rudely thrust out of the Castle of yon malignant, Thomas Luttrell, and mean not to depart far hence until I have duly investigated the serious matters before me, concerning this day's rebellious acts, I shall put up for the night at the hostelry below, known by the name of the Luttrell Arms. So forward, good Mauworth, to see to our reception, and provide stabling and provender for our horses," said Pym.

"May it please you sir, I fear that our presence among men dedicated to the service of the owner of this castle and town may not be acceptable, and our reception not over-courteous," said Mauworth.

ride on sir, and see all prepared for ou

Mauworth obeyed, and, striking his horse's flanks, galloped down the h town.

"Were I a justice of peace," said R
"I would e'en take away the license to comforts from such hostels as the Lu where profane toasts and improper son ly given and sung, as provocatives to ing and abusive language ; it is a stun and a stone of offence to such as be clined, to hear issuing from its doors a words of abuse directed against the g land, and such as shew due respect to ment."

"I, even I," snuffled Master Robert E
a preacher of the pure gospel, the
T and's attempt to

no better than a Scottish calvinist—oh—oh! how long? how long?”

The troopers and constables uttered a chorus of “Oh! oh! how long? how long?” in which the wool-comber’s voice predominated.

“Look for better times—look for a change,” said Pym; “the nation is awakened from its slothfulness; the plough is ready, the oxen harnessed, and it wants but the hand of one skilful in the art to guide the ploughshare. There will be stirring times ere long, and he that taketh not his station between the stilts, and doeth not his work without looking behind him, will be—but hark!—halt every one, and listen.”

The soldiers stopped, as if suddenly changed to stone, at the word of their commander. Roger Pri-ver and his men more slowly, but as quickly as they could, followed the example set them. The preacher asked the meaning of the sudden order to halt on their way, but Pym bade him hold his peace and listen.

“I hear nothing, Master Pym,” said Roger Pri-ver, after the party had halted for some five minutes,

worth's horse?" asked Pym.

"No truly, he has reached the inn and has already stabled his steed."

"I heard the tread of his horse die entered the town; suddenly the sound I fancied I heard a cry and a groan as expectedly assailed—forward, men, but Constables be ready to support us."

So saying, Pym rode forward, but no pace, followed by Roger Priver and his sort of jog-trot speed.

They entered the narrow street of the out meeting with any obstruction, and towards the inn about a hundred yard Pym, who was foremost, fancied he saw lying on the road before him, and called

"Bailiff, to the front, and see what our way." Roger Priver marched for

and the bailiff disappeared from the view of his friends.

"A snare, a snare!—the enemy—the enemy!" shouted Master Robert Browne; "he hath fallen into the hands of the Philistines."

"Charge! charge, and be steady!" cried Pym, as he set the example to his men by riding forward at a brisk trot.

"The rope, beware of the rope," was heard in the voice of Roger Priver; but, before the warning could reach the ears of those for whose benefit it was intended, Pym and his six troopers were thrown heavily to the ground; and, before they could rise, were seized by the hands of a multitude who seemed to spring from the ground.

"Long live King Charles and the noble Master Luttrell, and down with Pym and the Parliament!" cried one whose tones proclaimed him to be a Welshman.

"Out lanyards and make all taut," cried another.

"Ay, ay sir," said a third.

"Secure them, but offer no violence—I would not have a blow struck or a wound inflicted, though

I have unguents of no doubtful healing powers," said a fourth.

"Master mine," added a fifth, "do let us have a little phlebotomy, an it were but to see if the rogues' blood run red like honest men's."

"No jesting," said a sixth voice, "but hamstring their horses, and bind their riders firmly."

"What means this violence?" said Pym. "I command you in the name of the parl—"

Before he could complete his speech, a gag of some kind was passed over his mouth, and his hands were drawn closely behind his back. His girdle, which held his pistols, and the band from which his rapier hung suspended, were cut in twain, and a groan from the horse, which had fallen with him over a rope tightly strained across the street, told him that the order to hamstring all the cattle was being obeyed. Pym struggled hard to free himself, but the hands that held him were too powerful for him, strong as he was, to resist.

"Lie still, Master Pym," said a voice in his ear, "and you will suffer no further injury—resist, and this night may be your last : you have overacted

your part, and insulted and imprisoned men more beloved and respected than yourself."

Pym was forced to take this advice, for he was now on his back, with two powerful men holding him down.

A scuffle, and but a short one, took place among the constables. The sound of blows was heard, mingled with a few words, and those chiefly in the voice of the preacher Robert Browne, which was stayed evidently by something being tied over the aperture out of which the voice proceeded.

"Are all the horses disabled?" asked some one.

"All; all as useless as a craft without a rudder," was the answer.

"Then bind the riders two and two, and away with them to the iron mines, where they may lie snug enough, without friend or foe finding their unworthy bodies."

"And what is to be done with these poor hamstrung beasts, whose groaning is almost like that of men?" inquired another.

"Master mine, it strikes me that it were merciful to have them knocked on the head by our friends

here, and their carcasses thrown into the Hone, the river which rises at Cutcombe where King Pym, our prisoner, was born."

"Ay, ay, and let the stream carry them out to sea, to the spot where Master Luttrell well nigh lost his life."

A groan or two, and a gurgling sound, as of blood rushing forth, showed that the hint had been taken, and a heavy tramp of men seemed to intimate that numbers were not wanting to execute the orders for conveying the horses' carcasses into the river.

Pym and his followers were placed on their feet, and, supported by one on either side of them, led forth, past the old priory of Dunster and its ancient church, leaving the market-place and the hostel on their right hand. The march was performed in silence, and they quitted the town without so much as a single light being shown by which they might see the figures and faces of their foes; the moon too had long withdrawn her light.

We must leave them on their march towards Dunkery hill, at the foot of which were the iron mines, in which it was evidently the intention to imprison

them, and return to Ashley Combe Lodge, the seat of Master Bachell, Julian's father, which, the reader will be good enough to remember, was left in the possession of some of the troopers of Master Pym.

Janet, the gate-keeper's daughter, did not for one moment relax from her vigilance, in order that she might apprise her master of the unwelcome result of his son's having accompanied his friend, Hugh de Mohun, to the revels at Culbone. Her father's commands to quit the road and go to bed, though often repeated were not obeyed; she was resolved to await Master Bachell's return, let the consequences to herself be what they might.

Though the young May moon went down and left her in comparative darkness, still she walked slowly backwards and forwards between the little hamlet of Porlock-wear and the lodge in which her father dwelt, and listened anxiously for the footsteps of the horses, which bore her master and his attendant. At length, as the clock of Dunster church sent its booming notes over hill and vale, proclaiming the hour of ten, she distinctly heard the tread of

horses, and rushed down a narrow pathway through the woods, which would enable her to stop the riders at a wicket-gate, through which they must pass to enter the bridle-track that led to Ashley Combe.

Master Bachell was surprised when Janet seized his bridle, and begged him to stay and listen to what she had to tell him before he approached his house; and Alick Pearson, his groom, was not a little alarmed, that she, to whom he had plighted his honest troth, should be wandering about in the gloomy woods of Ashley Combe at so late an hour. The surprise of the master, and the jealousy of the groom, however, were allayed when they heard all that Janet had to impart. Her master bade her return to her home and retire to bed, but to be stirring in the morning, and give the servants notice that he knew of all that was going on, and to bid them offer no resistance or insult to the troopers left in possession of the Lodge.

Alick, stooping from his horse, kissed her cheek, and told her to take care of herself, and not let any of the rude soldiers see her, for fear her beauty should overcome their puritanical morality.

Janet smiled as she tripped off to the Lodge, and Master Bachell, turning his horse's head, rode at a smart canter, followed by his groom, through Porlock-wear and Porlock village towards Dunster, intending to ascertain the fate of his son and his companion, and to offer what assistance he might to Mistress Luttrell, in case her husband should not have returned from Clevedon.

Just as he arrived at the spot where the road branched off, on the left by Minehead to Dunster, and on the right by the base of Dunkery hill to the upper part of the town and the keep of the Castle, his progress was arrested by a procession which occupied the whole of the narrow road.

"Alick, come up and keep at my side; prepare your pistols, but do not fire unless we are attacked. This may be Master Pym and his party on their return, or it may be merely Giles Tudball and his sumpter horses, or his sumpter men trafficking inland: at all events be prepared and do as I do."

Alick rode up to his master's side, and drew a huge pistol from its holster, and, in his eagerness to ascertain whether friend or foe was before him, called out "Who goes there?"

"Who asks the question?" said some one springing from under the shade of the nut-tree hedge, and seizing his bridle.

"It is I—Bachell of Ashley Combe."

"Then good sir, you are among friends—ride on to Dunster, where you will find your son in safety with the Lord of the Castle. You will easily obtain admittance, for we have the gentlemen who were wise enough to take possession of it in our safe keeping, and mean to let them pass a quiet night in one of the mines here in Dunkery hill."

"I should know that voice," said Master Bachell, "and if I err not it belongs to Dr.—"

"Hush, good sir, hush!" said the mediciner "the locks about the ears of Pym and his puritans be so closely clipped, that not a whisper escapes them."

"Whom have you, with you then?" asked Master Bachell whispering.

"I will just give some orders to my man Jansen, and be with your worship anon," said Graveboys.

In a few seconds, the master of Ashley Combe could see the body of men who had halted at his approach pass through a field-gate on the right of the road, and enter upon a path which he knew

led across an open wild common to the entrance of the iron mines.

Graveboys returned as soon as the whole of the body of men had passed on their way, and explained to Master Bachell, as briefly as he could, all that had happened during this memorable day; and how that he, Giles Tudball, Master Robert Quirke, Jenkins and others, assisted by the loyal people of Dunster, had seized and gagged Master Pym and his followers, and were going to confine them in the iron mines, until Master Luttrell, Hugh de Mohun, and Julian Bachell, should have taken what measures they deemed necessary for their present safety.

Master Bachell seemed to think that the consequences of their rashness would be serious; but the mediciner assured him that they had taken such precautions, that none of the party who had executed the bold seizure of Pym, his troopers and followers, could ever be known. He begged that no violence might be offered to any one, and having obtained a promise to that effect from Graveboys, who assured him that every one should be

released as soon as Master Luttrell's pleasure should be known. he rode off to Dunster with Alick, as fast as his horse could carry him. He avoided the town, and gained the gates without meeting a soul. Basil Chigera, who was keeping watch within, after having seen Pym's troop-horses committed to the stream of the Hove, gladly admitted him within the walls, and obtained for him and his servant lodgings in the Castle, although its owner and the family had retired for rest an hour or two previously to his arrival.

Basil Chigera took the horses to the stables, and having supplied them with provender for the night, left them with the promise of a good grooming in the morning, and sought his own chamber in the lower room of the gateway of Dunster Castle, but ~~not~~ before he had seen the gates securely fastened.

CHAPTER XIII.

WHEN Pym and his party were safely thrust into the iron mines, at the foot of Dunkery hill, and their escape prevented, by heaping up large stones at the entrance, Master Robert Quirke, who, at the instigation of Basil Chipera, had been the principal actor in the attack, called his party together, and made each individual take a most solemn oath, never to divulge the names of any one who had had a share in the illegal proceeding.

He found no one unwilling to take the oath required of him, as none but those who were well-affected towards the owner of Dunster, and, what was beginning to be called, the king's party, were allowed to join in the attack.

Quirke and Graveboys, when they agreed to con-

fine Pym, and so allow Master Luttrell time to decide upon his plans, had both of them stipulated, that no violence should be offered to any one, beyond what was absolutely necessary for securing their persons, and preventing them from alarming the town by cries for help. In this they were ably seconded by Giles Tudball and the other principal actors, who had no ill-will against any one, except perhaps, Roger Priver, and Robert Browne the preacher; and their ill-feeling towards them was not sufficiently strong, to urge them to offer them any serious violence. The mines, in which it had been agreed upon to imprison them, were neither deep nor dangerous; they were on a level with the valley, and well ventilated by fissures in the hill above. Robert Quirke, too, before he left the mines, and he was the last to do so, took care to free Master Pym of the belt which bound his arms, and the strap that gagged his mouth, so that he might be at liberty to set all the rest of the prisoners free. He also, wisely took the precaution to disarm all the party, in case, which was not unlikely, they should quarrel with each other during their con-

finement; for, although they had acted together in their attacks on the revellers and the malignants, as they called the Bachells and the Luttrells, the constables and troopers were not as yet prepared to go the lengths to which Pym, the Preacher, and Roger Priver would have urged them.

They were opposed to popery and prelacy, but had not yet forgotten the feelings, of loyalty and respect for the gentry around them, in which they had been brought up. Mauworth, who was a tenant on Pym's estate, and treated by him as a confidential person, would have sided with his landlord in case of an open rupture; but he had been heard to say, that he thought Master Pym was going a little too far and too fast.

When the Dunster men had taken the oath imposed upon them by Quirke, they hastened back as rapidly as they could to the town, and sought their beds. Dr. Graveboys and Jansen went with the host of the Luttrell Arms, and put up at his house for the night—or rather morning: Robert Quirke returned to Minehead, with Tudball and Will Bowering; while Master Jenkins sought

the stores on the banks of the Hone where he had left his boat, in which he meant to reach the Blossom of Minehead, and sleep on board that lugger. The whole party effected their objects so successfully, that no one was aware of their having been absent on so desperate a business, but those who were not likely to betray them.

Before they parted, it had been settled that Dr. Graveboys should see Basil Chipera early on the following morning, and learn through him the wishes of Master Luttrell, concerning the disposal of Pym and his party, and if any danger was likely to result from their imprisonment, that the principal actors in it, should get out of the way until the danger was over. The arms, which had been taken away from the prisoners, were hidden in a brake, hard by the mouth of the mines.

The first act of Pym when he found himself at liberty to speak, was to address the soldiers and constables, and bid them submit quietly to the fate that had befallen them : his second was to release Mauworth and the preacher from their bonds, and to assist them in releasing the others. The

moment Master Robert Browne found his tongue at liberty, he burst out with his usual "how long? how long?" which produced a deep groan from every one but Roger Priver, who, forgetting the presence of Master Pym, no sooner found the gag removed from his mouth, than he uttered an oath against the men who had bound him, of so frightful a nature, as caused him to be severely reprimanded.

"Hath no one a light, that we may see the nature of the place, in which our enemies have confined us?" inquired Pym.

Some half-dozen men produced flints, and struck a light with their knives, catching the sparks in some tinder which they carried with them for the purpose of igniting their pipes. Mauworth produced some matches which he had about him, and succeeded in lighting one of them. By its short and flickering rays, they could see that they were in a sort of cavern, from which passages branched in all directions: they had not time to examine either of them, for before the light of the match had been exposed one minute, a flutter of

wings was heard, and the match was extinguished by something that flew against it. Another was ignited, which speedily shared the fate of its predecessor; and so alarmed the whole party, that they believed the preacher's assertion that Beelzebub was among them, and begged of Mauworth not to persevere in his attempts to enlighten those, who were evidently for a time, under the power of Satan.

"They be but bat-mice," said Roger Priver, "and were they devils I will have a light. I cannot endure this darkness."

He seized a match from Mauworth, and kindled a flame from his tinder; it flickered brightly for a moment, and was suddenly extinguished by something that struck him at the same time so sharp a blow on the face, as brought the tears to his eyes, and caused a small stream of blood to trickle down his cheek.

"May the curse of—" commenced Roger Priver.

"Swear not at all," said Pym, "the attempt to gain a light is useless; let each man betake himself to sleep, and see what the morning will bring forth. Mauworth, I would speak with you apart."

The sergeant, following the direction of his commander's voice, succeeded in reaching him ; and Pym, taking his hand, led him up the cavern, until he had reached such a distance from the rest, as he thought would prevent the tenor of his words being heard.

"Mauworth, I have no reason to doubt your fidelity," said Pym, "but I cannot account for your allowing us to fall into an ambushade, without giving an alarm."

"An it please you, sir, my horse stumbled over a rope, or some other obstruction, placed across the street of Dunster, and threw me over his head. I essayed to shout to give you warning, but ere a cry left my lips, my mouth was gagged, and I was held in the grasp of many men, against whose strength my struggles were unavailing."

"I guessed as much," said Pym in a whisper ; "but tell me sergeant, if you can, who were the leaders in this base attack on the authorities appointed by the parliament."

"I know them not," replied Mauworth, "so that I could positively swear to them, for they

spoke not a word that I could hear distinctly : but I have my suspicions."

"And on whom do they fall?" asked Pym.

Mauworth was about to name some of the parties concerned, when he was interrupted by a hubbub from the farther end of the cavern, caused by the high bailiff, and the troopers and constables, mutually accusing each other of being the cause of their being shut up in a loathsome prison, for a long night.

"We must quiet them, sir," said Mauworth, "or they will get to blows."

"Peace, peace;" shouted Pym, "and do you Master Browne offer up a prayer, and then let all seek the repose we so much need."

The preacher needed no further orders, but at once commenced a prayer, which, as it was an imprecation of everything undesirable upon the head of his enemies, might have been safely called a malediction. The commencement of it acted as a stimulant on his hearers, and was received with many marks of approbation; but when he left off abusing the men of Dunster, the malignants of the Castle,

and of Ashley-Combe, and the young men who were educated in the unseemly schools of papacy and prelatism; and launched out into a rambling discourse on the titles and claims he, as a servant of the gospel, had been unjustly deprived of; his words operated as a sedative and lulled most of his hearers to sleep. He was not aware of this effect, until in the midst of a severe censure upon Master Snelling, who had thrust him from his rightful pulpit, Roger Priver uttered so loud, and so prolonged a snore, as awakened an echo throughout the mines.

Master Browne was indignant; he raised his foot, and guessing from the sound, whereabouts Roger was lying, kicked him as hard as he could: the kick only produced a louder snore, and the preacher after inquiring "who hath ears to hear?" without receiving any answer, seated himself with his back against the sides of the cavern, and speedily followed the example set him by his congregation. They slept soundly for some time, for they were wearied by the long day's toil, and by their march from Dunster; but were aroused by a sud-

den, sharp cry, which caused them all to spring from their places, and seek the arms which had been taken from them.

"Blood, blood, more blood—ahah!—Say not *I* did it—you had a fair trial—a jury of your peers found you guilty—ahah! the laws—the laws—blame *them*—blame not *me*. Avaunt, thou headless thing."

The cavern rang with the cry, and every man's heart palpitated as he heard it.

"What means it?" said Roger Priver in a whisper heard by all.

"What means it?" said a voice which they then knew to be Master Pym's. "What means it? ye false friends—ye base churls—to suffer the guilty Strafford to thrust his headless trunk into my presence, and accuse me of his murder—what ho! Mauworth—take me hence—I will stay here no longer; remove *him* or carry me hence—I am choking."

"God's judgment," said one of the Dunster constables, to which a deep groan was responded.

"Hush, my friends, hush! he sleeps, and

dreams as he sleeps; I will awaken him," said Mauworth.

The men huddled together and trembled, as they held each other's hands, to hear the frightful shrieks that issued from Pym's lips, until his sergeant had succeeded in rousing him to a state of consciousness. When he was fully awakened, and apprized of what he had uttered, he excused himself, by saying that he had had a frightful dream, and begged of them to seek repose again.

They were all of them however, too much alarmed to sleep, and huddled together, as patiently as they could, waited until morning should dawn upon them. They did not dare to make any audible remarks on what had alarmed them, for fear they should reach the ears of Master Pym, who was now conversing with Mauworth as rationally and calmly, as if nothing had occurred to disturb him.

Master John Pym, although he had from the commencement of his parliamentary career, universally opposed the royalists, and taken an active part with Mr. Hampden and those who resisted the payment of the ship-tax, was gentlemanly

in his demeanor, and mild in his manners and language, until he had rendered himself so obnoxious to the king, that he came into the house, shortly after the assassination of Buckingham, to seize him and four other members. Pym escaped the danger, and absented himself from the house for awhile. When he returned, a change was observed in him: he was more severe in his looks, and his language was violent: he took the lead of his party, and when the impeachment of the Lord Strafford was determined upon, he untiringly persevered in his attempts to secure his condemnation and execution. He was also the bitterest enemy of the established church, and lost no opportunity of assailing the bishops, and the deans and chapters; and of encouraging those, who, under the pretence of their being remnants of papistry, sought to remove the communion tables and the rails which surrounded them, from the eastern ends of the churches. Nothing in fact, was proposed to injure the church, in which he was not a prominent actor. Of all the enemies whom Archbishop Laud had, none was more perseveringly bitter than John Pym, although they

were contemporaries at Oxford; Laud being a member and president of St. John's college, and Pym a student of Broadgates Hall, now Pembroke college.

As a country gentleman, Pym was much beloved; he was a kind husband, an affectionate father, and a considerate landlord to his tenantry. As a neighbour, his company was sought after and appreciated by those, even, who differed from him in politics, until after the execution of Strafford, when he suddenly found himself shunned by all who had previously courted his society.

He grew morose and peevish; seldom appeared in Somersetshire, and made the leadership of his party in the commons, an excuse for absenting himself from his family. His moroseness increased, too, greatly, after his intercourse with the Scottish Covenanters, who were referred to him as the most powerful person upon whom they could rely to advocate their claims.

It was in the midst of his conferences with these opponents of a ritual, that he had been summoned into Somersetshire, by news of the illness

to his temporary confinement in the
Dunkery hill.

"Mauworth," said Pym, "tell me,
me truly, what I have said that those fo
der are alarmed at."

Mauworth repeated to him the words
uttered in his dream.

"Will it ever be thus? will the vision
leave me? I would that daylight were co
the gloom and heavy air of this cavern o
me. What hour is it, think you?"

"Nay, sir, I know not, and I fear me tha
those same caitiffs, who have entombed us,
the obstacles at the mouth of this cavern, w
be long ere we discern day from night," said
worth.

"They cannot mean to murder us: to l
here to die of famine" - said Pym - "they will

"We can at least make a struggle for our liberty: we are a strong body, and may force the entrance, which they can have barred only with loose stones and rubbish," said the sergeant.

"Let the trial be made instantly," said Pym, "for I feel as if I should be suffocated."

The bailiff and his men, and the troopers, were ordered to set about trying to remove the obstacles that closed the entrance. They worked long and resolutely, but having no instruments to assist them in their task, made but a slight impression on the bulk of stones that had been heaped at the mouth of the mine.

When they were exhausted with their attempts, and had given them up in despair, they threw themselves upon the ground, firmly persuaded, that the cavern in which they were confined would be their burial place. Robert Browne, in his alarm, commenced chaunting the burial service of the church, aided by Roger Priver; and Pym, with his sergeant at his side, paced up and down the mine without speaking a word.

Suddenly a noise was heard at the entrance,

like the fall of masonry, which grew louder and louder. All sprung to their feet, and their hearts leapt in their bosoms when the light of day shone in upon them; and then each man rushed to the opening, and assisted those without in removing the rocks which still opposed their escape. When an opening wide enough to admit the passage of a man was made, Pym stepped forth, and saw Master Luttrell and Master Bachell, with a strong party of Dunster men waiting to receive him.

CHAPTER XIV.

WHEN Master Pym stepped forth, followed by his party, neither of the gentlemen who had come to release them, could refrain from laughing. The soil of the mines, a kind of red ochre, had stained their clothes and persons, so that they looked like a body of wild Indians rather than Englishmen. The Dunster men, when they beheld Roger Priver and their other towns-fellows, the constables, so strangely disfigured, fairly shouted with glee, and were so boisterous in their laughter, that Master Luttrell was compelled to threaten them with his severest displeasure, if they did not cease their unseasonable clamour.

When silence was somewhat restored, Master Luttrell addressed Pym, and told him, that he deeply

regretted the unworthy manner in which he had been treated, and that the moment he was informed by Master Bachell of what had occurred, he had summoned his retainers and hastened over to release him. He added that he would use his best exertions to discover, and punish the parties who had been guilty of so gross an outrage.

“He lieth, he lieth! believe him not; it was the malignant himself that gave the orders to his ungodly dependants to confine us, while he and yon other malignant there, might lay their plans, to ensure the escape of those who disobeyed the warrant of Master Speaker, and the parliament, and insulted their officers—”

“Aye, and did plunge them in a brook, and tore up my warrant of authority—oh! oh!”

“Silence, good Master Browne; be silent, Bailiff of Dunster; your wrongers shall not go unpunished: the proceedings of yesterday and the past night shall be laid before the house of commons: let Master Luttrell and Master Bachell look to it: Dunster Castle and Ashley-Combe Lodge may find other owners shortly, in men

more inclined to be obedient to those, to whose hands the people have entrusted the supreme authority," said Pym.

"While we have a king and a house of peers," said Master Bachell, "I for one, shall not acknowledge the supremacy of the lower house; more especially when it is made up of violent men, who curry favour of the lowest of the people, and seek to gain an ascendancy in the state, by pandering to their basest passions."

"Nor I," said Master Luttrell. "I am a magistrate as well as yourself, Master Pym, and as zealous in the due administration of the laws; but I cannot esteem any warrant legal, that has not the authority of the king—God bless him."

Master Luttrell raised his plumed hat from his brow, and his example was followed by all his party, who uttered a loud shout of "Long live King Charles."

"How long?—how long?" groaned the preacher.

"Heed them not, Master Browne," said Pym, "let them shout their loudest. It may gratify them to cry, 'Long live the king,' but let them shout as

loudly as they will, Charles Stuart must have good ears to hear them, seeing that he is sojourning in York."

While Pym addressed these few words to the preacher, the leaders of the Dunster party, were begging of their followers not to indulge in any remarks, or utter any shouts which might be reported to their disadvantage. They ceased shouting therefore, but turned such threatening looks on their opponents, as showed that they would gladly have used stronger language in their hearing, and even proceeded to blows, had the slightest hint been given to them by their superiors, that an attack upon the Roundheads would have been agreeable to them.

"May I ask, Master Pym, on what good grounds my poor house of Ashley-Combe, is invaded by your troopers or trained-bands as you call them, and my servants put under restraint?" inquired Bachell.

"And I too would know, why I find, on my return from a distant voyage, my Castle converted into a prison, my wife alarmed, and the establishment thrown into disorder," said Master Luttrell.

"You shall both know, and that soon," said Pym, "that a strange thing hath been done in the land, and that too by your instrumentation. An offence has been committed against all godly men, and in direct opposition to the orders of the parliament. The young Hugh de Mohun, and Julian Bachell may generously, as youth is wont to do, take upon themselves all the responsibility of the unlawful doings at Culbone, but those who ought, by virtue of the authority reposed in them, to have prevented such scenes, shall not escape the punishment due to them, under the plea of absence from home, and ignorance of what was going on. For the unworthy treatment which I, and my followers here have experienced, in having been expelled by force from Dunster Castle in the night, and shut up in a close, loathsome cavern, I must have satisfaction—"

"Take it now," said Master Bachell, laying his hand on the hilt of his rapier.

"Nay, good Bachell," said Luttrell, "It was I who removed him from Dunster, of which he complains, and from me he shall have that satisfaction he requires. Draw, Master Pym fear not that

you shall not have fair play, for I pledge you my word, that he, of my Dunster followers, who offers to interfere between us, shall have his ears cropped as closely as the hair of your retainers."

Pym smiled gloomily, as Mauworth and his followers drew up to his side, as if to support him, and said—"No, Masters of Dunster and Ashley-Combe; the insult has been passed upon the parliament through me its unworthy officer—"

"He never spoke a truer word; unworthy he is," said one of the Dunster men.

"And the parliament," continued Pym, not heeding the remark, "shall give me the satisfaction I require. I imbrue not my hands in the blood of my neighbours, in any private quarrel."

Mauworth looked disconcerted, and the preacher and Roger Priver groaned, as if disappointed at not seeing Pym fall on and slay one of the malignants, at least. Bachell and his friend exchanged smiles, accompanied by a curl of the lip and a shrug of the shoulders. The Dunster men laughed outright, and the words cowardly, crop-ear'd rogue, passed among them.

"You hear, good Master Pym—you hear," said Browne ; "let not our good cause suffer by withholding the strong arm. I myself, am ready for the fray, rather than our enemies should triumph over us ungodly. Smite them, even to the death."

"You forget we have no arms," said Mauworth.

"Be silent, I intreat you," said Pym, "no man who knows me, will accuse me of a want of courage ; a public offence hath been committed, and its punishment shall not be a private matter, but of such a nature, as to lead others to be unwilling to offend in the same way in future."

"We shall not shrink from any investigation, legally made, into our conduct, and I pledge you my word as a gentleman, that neither my friend Bachell here, nor myself, will attempt to evade giving that satisfaction which the law can demand of us," said Master Luttrell.

"And the young men—Hugh de Mohun and Julian Bachell, they must be given up to us ; they are our prisoners and—"

"Not so, you forget Master Pym, that you are

virtually our prisoners, seeing that we have you in our power, unarmed and unhorsed," said Master Bachell, "but I will be responsible for the appearance of my son, to answer any charge you may bring against him, in any lawfully constituted court."

"Our arms and our horses must be restored to us, and that instantly," said Pym.

"For your arms—search yonder bushes, and take them, and use them in a better cause than depriving the people of their innocent amusements, and alarming the servants and families of private gentlemen, when they are left unprotected; for your horses—if you would recover their bloated and swollen carcasses, go, follow the Hone to where its pure, fresh waters mingle with the salt waves of the Channel," said Master Luttrell.

"You have not dared to—"

"*I have dared nothing,*" said Luttrell interrupting Pym, "I knew nothing whatever of the intended attack on your party after you quitted my Castle, neither did Master Bachell; but your conduct to two of your nearest neighbours and former friends,

it seems, urged the townsmen of Dunster to resort to measures, that I would have prevented had I known of them in time."

Mauworth and Roger Priver had armed themselves and their men, as soon as the place where their weapons had been deposited had been made known to them, and before the short dialogue between Master Luttrell and their leader was ended, had formed themselves behind the latter. The Dunster men seeing their movements, drew themselves up behind their leaders, and by their looks betrayed their anxiety for a struggle to commence.

"Back, Mauworth—back, and draw off your men; heard you not that I said I would make of this grave matter no private quarrel?" said Pym.

"Ah Lord! and ah! his glory, it is departed," said the preacher.

"Oh—oh!" groaned Roger Priver, letting his pike fall heavily on the ground, an example which all the troopers followed.

"Men of Dunster, I will have no further violence committed," said Master Luttrell, "the evil that has been done already, may inconvenience

you all more than you reckon upon; lay aside your arms."

"Nay, not so," said Master Bachell; "keep your arms in readiness, my friends, for, unless my eyes deceive me, yonder, along the road from Ashley-Combe, come some mounted troopers, who, by their dress and bearing, are a part and portion of Master Pym's trained-bands."

"Nay, there are but four of them," said Master Luttrell, "and we are a match for them at any rate."

All eyes were turned upon the four men, who, as soon as they arrived at the gate leading from the lane towards the mines, turned into it, and galloped up to their leader, Pym; each of them looked pale and haggard, and turned his head behind him as if he dreaded pursuit.

"How now, sirrahs?" said Pym, when he saw who the men were, "did I not leave you at Master Bachell's Lodge of Ashley-Combe, and bid you remain there until further orders? what has driven you thence thus hastily, and with the marks of cravens on your brows?"

"The devil" said the foremost of them.

"Sathanas, Sathanas!" said the rest, groaning, in which they were aided and assisted by Robert Browne, Roger Priver, and the troopers.

"Cease your clamour and tell me plainly, what means this nonsense?" asked Pym.

"The devil—the devil—sathanas—sathanas!" groaned out the four together.

"They have been over-free of the wine-pot, and are now but parcel-sober," said Mauworth.

"Good comrade Mauworth, and you most honored sir, we are most sober, seeing that the churl of a butler at Ashley-Combe, would supply us with nothing but fair water from the spring, after your departure, saying that even that was too good for such as we."

"He showed his prudence if not his hospitality," said Pym; "but what happened to you to alarm you?"

"The dev—"

"Pshaw! man, facts," said Mauworth.

"Finding, honored sir, that no further bodily refreshments were forthcoming, and being somewhat fatigued with the exertions of the day, we

did lay ourselves down to rest, after locking the servants, and securing the outer doors, so no one could gain admittance without giving us notice, according to your honour's orders.

beds truly were soft, and our slumbers were heavy, yet did none of us rest long; for noises, such as no earthly sounds resemble, disturbed us; and visions from the fiends beset us at intervals, which of we bear the marks even now, as though we had been cudgelled by mortal hands; and our countenances were moistened as we lay, either by the sweat from our frightened bodies, or by water poured upon us by the evil one."

"Oh! oh! how long? how long?" said Robert Browne.

"Silence, preacher; and do you proceed, fellow," said Pym.

"We engaged in prayer, honored sir, and the fiends left us awhile, but anon returned again buffeted us sorely—"

"Fools!" said Mauworth, "did your countenances fail you, so that you could not discover your tormentors?"

"Our lights failed us, good Mauworth, and we were in the darkness of despair until day-light came, and shewed us everything as we had left it overnight: not a bolt or lock drawn or unfastened; all the servants shut up in their respective rooms. One fair maiden from the gate-lodge, told us that the night had been fearfully stormy, and that she had seen lights and sights in the stables, such as had never been seen at Ashley-Combe before, and truly when we sought our horses, we found them reeking with sweat, and covered with mud and foam, as though they had been ridden or driven all night long."

"Oh! oh! how long? how long? Satan hath prevailed," said the preacher.

"Well sirrah, and then?" said Pym.

"And then," said the trooper, "we mounted our horses, meaning to ride to Dunster, to inform your honour that Master Bachell was not returned to his house, and to ask what we were to do with our prisoners, whom we have left in security. Seeing a crowd assembled here as we rode by, we judged it might be best to join it, and see the cause of its assembling."

"A mighty fine story, truly," said Mauworth; "the fools have been frightened out of their wits.

"Never trust me again," said Alick Pearson, in a whisper to his master, "if I be wrong in saying that Janet hath done this: she, doubtless unfastened the doors for her fellow-servants, and they, having beaten and scared the knaves to their heart's content, submitted to be shut up again, to make them believe that their tormentors were not mere mortals."

"But the horses? how can you account for the state they were found in?" asked Master Bachell.

"Janet's father, no doubt has been driving them round the pastures, while their riders were being punished within," said Alick.

"Master Bachell," said Pym, "have you a hand in this unseemly business?"

"I was not at my house, as your own men will testify, last night: I passed it at the Castle of Master Luttrell, of which he and others can assure you, and in riding thither, I heard of your detention here, and had it not been so late, and that Master Luttrell had retired, well-nigh worn

out by fatigue, and alarm for the safety of his ward, I would have aroused him and brought him to release you on the instant."

"I cannot doubt your word, sir," said Pym, "but here be matters that must be investigated. I will return with you to Ashley-Combe, and will, if I may make so bold, remain there until I am furnished with horses, and enabled to return to Cutcombe."

As a guest, Master Pym shall be welcome to Ashley-Combe, if he will dismiss his followers, and place himself under my protection; but as one having authority from one estate of the realm, in direct opposition to my sovereign's wishes, I cannot, and will not admit him within my walls," said Master Bachell; "my servant's horse is at his service. Alick, dismount and give place to Master Pym; you can follow us on foot."

Pym seemed hesitating how to act, when Mauworth drew his attention to two troopers, each with a led horse by his side, riding down Dunkery Hill in a direction from Cutcombe, to where they were standing. They soon came to the spot, and

CHAPTER XV.

HUGH de Mohun and Julian Bachell, weary from the exertions and excitements of the day, slept longer and sounder than was their habit. They were early risers by habit, but when they awoke on the morning after the revels at Clifton the sun was already high in the heaven. Julian sprung from his bed at once, and dressed himself, but Hugh, who had been busy in watching the waves of the Bristol Channel, turned on his side and sought sleep again. He was in hopes that the visions of his slumbers would return for

had rendered her, that he awoke. He had just sunk again into that pleasant state, when we are not certain whether we are awake or asleep, as his door was opened, and a hand laid upon his shoulder.

“What ho! friend Hugh,” said a voice, “arouse thee man, and enjoy the freshness of the morning air.”

“Ay—ay, Giles Tudball and Will Bowering—I hear you—I come, I come—hold you but taut upon the haulser, and she shall yet be saved—a few strokes of my right arm will see us on dry land,” murmured Hugh, as rearing his left arm aloft, and using his right hand as if in the act of swimming, he turned and raised himself in his bed.

“Why how now, Hugh? art dreaming over again the scenes of yesterday?” asked Julian, as he gazed on the handsome face of his friend.

“Is it you, Julian? I would not use a harsh word to one whom I esteem as I do thee? but I would thou hadst been any where but here, just now; thou hast broken the thread of the pleasantest dream that—”

repeat the thanks she uttered so freely yest-
and is perhaps—and it is of more conse-
to her, waiting to break her fast: up man
Julian.

Hugh rose in his bed, and wondered
was not in his own room in the turret, w
usual means of exchanging his sea dress,
sober suit of grey, within his reach. Juli
obliged to repeat to him the later transacti
the past night, before he could account for hi
in a small sleeping room within the Castle, i
of in his own little closet, over the gateway.

“Thanks, Julian, thanks, I understand r
sition clearly now, but my mind has been
less though my body has not; I have dre
Julian, the most delicious—”

“Pooh, pooh, man; banish them, as I sa
fore, for the more pleasing reality” said

“ But I have nothing to put on save my mumming dress, as Mistress Tudball calls my sea-going suit, and I dare hardly appear before my kind tutor in the clothes that are scarcely yet dry from my truanting yesterday ; do summon Basil Chipera, if thou canst, and bid him provide me with a suit more proper to appear in.”

“ Nay, were I Hugh de Mobun, I should choose rather to present myself to the pretty eyes of Prudence Everard, in the dress wherein she will recognise her preserver, than in a modest suit, more befitting the person of an Oxford student, than one who mastered the old Berkshire stick-player, and the burly butcher in the wrestling ring ; and afterwards proved himself so good a swimmer, as to save a fair girl from a watery grave. But if you really are not willing to appear in your damp sailor's dress, here, I will freely give up my forester's suit to you, and don your mumming garments : in good sooth, I would not mind the risk of chills, agues, and rheumatism, to be mistaken for you, if it were but for a few minutes, to enjoy the smiles of gratitude that the fair Prudence will not

join you on the terrace in a few seconds."

Julian smiled significantly as he left his
who, in a short period, joined him in the same
as he had worn on the previous day.

"To the keep—to the keep," said Hugh,
us enjoy the fresh breezes from the Channel on
lovely morning; they will brace our nerves
give us fresh life."

As he uttered these words, Hugh fairly
before his friend up the short ascent that ran to
the Castle, and led to the keep. The path
made through a dense mass of elms, which covered
three sides of the steep on which the Castle stood.
As they bounded along, the rooks, hundreds
whom nestled in the branches above them,
left their nests, and flew screaming upwards;
after circling round their homes for a few seconds
settled again, as if aware no enemy was near.

the exertions he had made to reach the summit; "here we are, on the loveliest spot in the west of this fair Isle; see, yonder is Grabhurst Hill, that emulates this torr in height, and there is Dunkery, and there Conygar, and below it Minehead, at the foot of lofty Greenaleigh—and there, look there, Julian, is Hone-mouth, and Master Luttrell's little craft, lying as unconcernedly as though her planks had not been in danger of parting company with each other; and there are the stores of Master Robert Quirke, and, as I believe, Giles Tudball's Blossom of Minehead just setting her sails; and yonder are the Welsh Hills or mountains, as Master Jenkins calls them, and—"

"A truce—a truce, good Hugh—you forget that these scenes are familiar to me, who have been a frequent visitor at Dunster Castle; but see here, Hugh; here down through this vista in the woods, the wheel of the mill of Dunster, dashing the waters of the bright brook that flows from Grabhurst, over its whirling surface. Is it not beautiful, to see through this gloomy grove, the spray sparkling like brilliants, in the gleams of the sunshine below?"

habitation for rooks and singing birds, stately sentinels uttered their watch-words, the guard went its rounds, or a strange foot heard, the nightingale's notes, and the wh the blackbird or the mavis are now hea gled with the joyful chirrupings of other song birds. Yon crumbling ruins, could less tell some tales of woe and misery their disjointed stones but speak."

As he said this, Hugh pointed to the round tower, which impended over the Castle the town, and commanded the hills that rounded it on every side but the one which down upon the marsh-grounds, and the Castle. But little of the building remained ; but what had not been cleared away, shewed an archway, flanked by walls of enormous thickness formed of the dark red sandstone.

sumed in filling up some gloomy dungeons below them, and a subterranean cavern, which communicated with the Castle, and thence, by other passages, with the priory of Dunster, in order that in troublous times, the monks might find a safe retreat in the Castle.

Julian, leaning on Hugh's shoulder, drew him gently towards the door of the tower, and pointing to the remains of the arch, shewed him two shields, each bearing on its mutilated surface a coat of arms.

"These, Hugh, are said to be the shields of the whilome owners of Dunster ; you see, though but faintly, the one on the left, bears, *gule*, a dexter arm, habited in a maunch, *ermine*, the hand, *proper*, holding a fleur de lis, *or* ; that on the right, bears *or*, a cross engrailed, *sable*."

"I see," said Hugh, "though I confess I am not curious in heraldry ; I would earn a coat of arms for myself, rather than be indebted for it to some ancestor, many generations removed. These, however, I can, even in my ignorance of such matters, testify are not the arms of the Luttrells, for they, as you may see, without and within the Castle walls,

bear for their crest, five feathers in a plume, and for arms, a sable bend between six martlets, having for supporters, two swans with coronets around their throats."

"Those Hugh," said Julian seriously, pointing to the archway, "those are the arms of the Mohuns, formerly owners of this Castle and its demesnes, with many fair acres around them: you best know whether *you* have any claim to wear them."

"Julian Bachell," said Hugh, after a closer examination of the heraldic shields than he had before deigned to bestow upon them, "I know not, whether or no I am entitled to bear those arms: a mystery hangs over me, but I care not at present to seek to solve it. My father, I am told—"

"Nay—nay, Hugh," said Julian, "do not—do not for a moment fancy that I sought to entrap you into the betrayal of any family secrets."

"I do not fancy it; an I did, I should be silent. My father, I am told, died early in my childhood, and by violence. My mother sought to hide her grief in a foreign land, leaving me to the care of an old nurse, in my infancy, and afterwards to my kind friend and tutor Master Robert Snel-

ling, now parson of Dunster. I have that opinion of his judgment and discretion, Julian, that I have never pressed him to relate to me more of my family matters, than he has thought right to impart; but I doubt not, that when he deems it fitting and proper, I shall be made fully acquainted with every circumstance, that it concerns me to know: but who cometh here?"

"Basil Chipera, or my eyes deceive me," said Julian.

The parish clerk and cordwainer of Dunster, sprung lightly up the steps upon the green sward, which led to the keep, and doffing his cap, begged to know, "whether it were the young gentlemen's pleasure to break their fast with the ladies in the hall, or to have a meal served for them, with the chaplain Master Snelling."

"With the ladies, by all means," said both the young men.

"Then follow me, sirs, for the meal is already set out, and Mistress Luttrell and her ward, wait but for my summons to take their seats."

"For *your* summons?" asked Julian; "where then is the butler, that you are acting in his room?"

"May it please you, Master Julian, I am almost the only male domestic left within the walls, for the serving-men were summoned, early in the morning, to act as a body-guard to their master, and his friend Master Bachell of Ashley-Combe, who are—"

"My father—hath he been at Dunster Castle?"

"He arrived late last night, after you had retired, and would not have you disturbed from your rest. He roused my master, at an early hour this morning, with the news that the friends and allies of certain youthful revellers, had taken Master Pym and his followers in a trap, on their way hence to Ashley-Combe, and had shut them up for the night, in the iron mines at the foot of Dunkery Hill."

"And Master Luttrell?" said Hugh.

"Rose, on the instant, and summoning all the servants, and several of the Dunster men, set out with Master Bachell to release them," said Basil.

"And why did he not rouse us? surely our assistance might have been deemed—"

"Your presence might have been productive of bad consequences," said Basil Chipera, "though

Roger Priver had had his warrant torn to shreds, Pym is not one to be trifled with, and hath a strong party to back him."

"Pooh! the Dunster men—I mean the *true* men, could have easily mastered Roger Priver and his comitatus with Pym's trained-bands to boot," said Julian.

"I meant neither comitatus nor trained troopers, when I spoke of Master Pym's having a strong party to back him," said Basil; "I alluded to the parliament, which seems to usurp the powers of the king."

"And do the ladies," asked Hugh de Mohun, "know the cause of their being thus left to the services of Basil Chipera, and the companionship of the two young gentlemen, who have, unwittingly it is true, been the cause of these unpleasant disturbances?"

"Doubtless sir, doubtless; for Mistress Luttrell herself, ordered her tiring-maid to summon you to the meal which I was preparing; but, for certain reasons, I thought I had better relieve her from so onerous a duty, and come myself," said Basil; and

as he said so, he uttered a low, peculiar sound, some thing between a cough and a laugh.

“What, sirrah!—how mean you? would’st hint, that Mohun or I, would offer any rudeness to the discreet serving-maid of Mistress Luttrell?”

“Far be it from my thoughts; rudeness? no, no rudeness, but I thought I might be better able to supply the information you would require than”—

“A pretty young woman, whose breath might have failed her, under the exertion of climbing to the keep of Dunster Castle,” said Hugh.

Basil Chipera gave another of his peculiar sounds, and then turned and ran rapidly down the slopes, to the Castle. The young men followed him more leisurely, and when they entered the hall, found the ladies already seated at the upper table, and a few domestics, all of the weaker sex save Basil Chipera, in attendance upon them.

As Hugh de Mohun approached the table, and removed his cap, which allowed his luxuriant black hair to fall over his shoulders, Julian thought him

the handsomest man he had ever seen, and when he removed his eyes from his friend, and turned them on Prudence Everard, he fancied that he read the same opinion in her speaking looks. She looked pale, and as if suffering from the cold and fright of the previous evening; but, when she rose to return her preserver's salutation, the blood mounted to her face, and her eyes beamed so brightly, and so sweet a smile spread itself over her features, that Julian thought, with no little surprise, that, until that moment, he had had no notion Prudence Everard was so very beautiful.

He removed his gaze however, from the preserver and the preserved, to pay his attentions to Mistress Luttrell, who, when she had returned the salutations of the young men, and made kind inquiries after their health, summoned Basil Chipera to his post, and set them an example to commence the morning's meal, which they were not slow to follow.

The meal was eaten nearly in silence, for the table was surrounded by female domestics; but, as soon as it was ended, Mistress Luttrell, leaning on

the arm of Prudence Everard, led the way to the library, and bade the young men follow her.

“Here is one here, Hugh de Mohun, to whom it becometh you to apologize humbly for having absented yourself, without permission, from his valuable lectures, and for appearing in a dress, which, however well it becomes you as a man, is all unseemly for a student. Master Snelling, if the book you are pondering over, can spare your earnest gaze for a few seconds, I would pray you to bestow them in chiding your runaway pupil here,” said Mistress Luttrell, smiling as she spoke.

“My dear Hugh—my dear Hugh, you are welcome: I forgive you all the trouble and anxiety you have cost me—freely forgive you, for having rescued this dear child here,” said the tutor, taking Prudence Everard by the hand, and imprinting a kiss upon it. “Had she perished in the waves, Dunster Castle would have scarcely again been enlivened by a smile from its mistress.”

“True, true, good Master Snelling, in losing Prudence Everard, I should have felt that I had lost a daughter; indeed Hugh, we—that is, I, cannot be sufficiently grateful for your—”

"Nay, say no more, madam; Julian here, is equally entitled to your praises with myself," said Hugh.

"No," said Julian, sharply; "no, whatever merit is due, is due to you, Mohun. It may be my good fortune to deserve the thanks of Mistress Everard at some future time."

The words uttered by Julian were uttered in so unwonted a tone, that the ladies, Hugh de Mohun, and even the usually absent Master Snelling, could not help looking earnestly at him, to see if anything had ruffled his temper. His cheeks were flushed, and his light blue eyes sparkled proudly, as he turned them first on Prudence Everard, and then upon Hugh de Mohun, who returned his gaze so fixedly, that Julian shrunk abashed from it, and, turning on his heel, sought a distant window, that commanded a view of the town and the approach to the Castle.

Hugh was about to follow him, and demand the meaning of his haughty looks and proud demeanor, but Mistress Luttrell and Prudence, who, by a glance at each other, seemed to have commu-

Master Snelling a long account of the Culbone revels, enabled Julian to recover it is true, his good-humour. He even supplied particular details, which Hugh's modesty allowed him to recount fully and fairly; he had done so, as if he had acquitted a debt due to another, he again turned heel, and sought his former station at the

Hugh followed his movements with again the colour rose to his cheeks, and bent on demanding of him, on the spot, an explanation of his unusual conduct. Again, a tact was employed to prevent mischief was requested to go with Master Snelling to town, and inquire for news of his father's party who had accompanied him to the mines.

"I would do your bidding," said

very party, of whom you seek some news, already approaching the Castle. Yonder come Master Luttrell and my father, with the Castle servants, having dismissed the Dunster men at the door of the hostelry, into which they are hurrying, as bees into a hive, doubtless to break their fast at the expense of the lord of this Castle," said Julian.

The sound of horses' hoofs on the hard, rocky road, leading up to the gates, was shortly heard, and, in a few minutes, Master Luttrell and Julian's father entered the library, and briefly recounted the result of their interview with Pym. They then sought refreshment in the hall, whither they bade the two young men follow them, leaving Mistress Luttrell and Prudence Everard to the companionship of the parson of Dunster.

Master Bachell seemed inclined to be severe upon his son for the part he had taken in the revels, but Hugh de Mohun generously exonerated him from all blame, by explaining the means to which he had resorted to induce him to be his companion. In this he was aided by Master Luttrell, who, good-

humouredly rated Hugh on his imprudence, and bade him, who had been the sole cause of all the difficulties and dangers likely to result from his wild thoughtlessness, suggest some means of appeasing the wrath of Pym, and compensating Roger Priver and the preacher for the ill-treatment to which they had been subjected.

"I alone have been to blame," said Hugh, "and upon me alone let the anger of Pym and the wrath of Priver and Master Browne fall."

"Whatever punishment the parliament, by its orders, inflicts upon Mohun, I share at any and all risks," said Julian : "it never shall be said, that a Bachell yielded to another in generosity ; even though that other be a stranger, and altogether unknown, except as the pupil of a good man and a protégé of the owner of this Castle."

"Why how now?" said Julian's father, looking searchingly at his son, "do you, Julian, call your friend Hugh there a stranger, and allude to a Mohun as an unknown? what means this? It seems to me, that, since I left Ashley-Combe yesternorn, madness has seized upon every one."

"What the young Master Bachell may mean, I know not," said Hugh; "but within this half-hour, he seems to me to have taken up a tone and manner as insulting to me as they are unaccountable. If he hath cause of quarrel, let him state it, he shall not find me backward in—"

"Tush, boy, tush!—if Julian's temper be soured, the point of your rapier, or a ball from one of your play-thing pistols, will not sweeten it," said Master Bachell.

"Nor those haughty looks, with which you eye your friend," said Master Luttrell: "but what means it all, Hugh? I pray you explain."

"I know not what it means, nor have I any explanation to offer," said Hugh, "I pray you, inquire of the young Master Bachell, what cause of quarrel I have given him."

"Julian, what does all this mean?" asked his father.

"Nay, ask Mohun; he can best tell why he treats me with such looks, and even offers to back his haughty demeanor towards me with his arms. I have no quarrel with him," said Julian.

"Nor have I any quarrel with you, Julian. I cannot, in any way, account—"

"Then shake hands and be friends again, if you have been foes, even in imagination," said Master Bachell.

Julian extended his hand, and Mohun took it, but each felt, that the gripe of the other was different from what he had always hitherto found it, and each sat silently apart, during the discussion that followed between the seniors, as to the best mode of being prepared to meet the accusations that would be brought against them by Pym. After a lengthened conversation, it was agreed, that Master Bachell and Julian should return to Ashley-Combe, and there, quietly and in secrecy, arm their followers; while Master Luttrell was pursuing the same plan with the tenants and retainers of the Castle; and that each should give the other notice if any danger impended over him, and both be prepared for mutually assisting and protecting each other.

The council, if such the little meeting might be called, was then broken up, and, after having taken

leave of the ladies, Master Bachell and Julian, mounted on one of Master Luttrell's horses, left the Castle followed at a respectful distance by Alick Pearson.

When they had left Dunster town, and were passing under the dark boughs of the pines which covered the sides of Conygar hill, his father rode close to Julian's side, and inquired of him, firmly, but kindly, the meaning of the tone he had assumed, and the rude allusions he had made to one, whom, for some months past, he had proudly acknowledged as a friend.

Julian tried to evade giving an answer to his father's questions, by saying, that he had merely followed an example set him by Hugh; but, upon being closely examined and pressed home, he at last owned, that he felt offended by the looks and tones bestowed by Prudence Everard upon one comparatively a stranger to her;—so much kinder and softer, than she had ever cast upon him, whom she had known for many years.

“And so, young man, because a fair girl allows her eyes to beam kindly upon a youth who saved her life at the risk of his own, and thanks him for

his timely succour, in warmer and softer tones than she bestows upon a mere acquaintance of her infancy, you must needs feel offended, and vent your spleen upon one, whom you should feel proud to call your friend," said Master Bachell.

"I shall call him so no longer, unless he apologizes for his haughty looks and inflated demeanor. A Bachell is not to be insulted by a mere stranger, and one who knows so little of his own origin, as not to be able to recognize the arms borne by those of his own name when he sees them," replied Julian.

"Talk not so foolishly, Julian," said his father ; "though a mystery may, for a time, hang over the birth of Hugh de Mohun, he will at some future period, prove his right to wear the arms earned by his ancestors, or bravely win, in the field of battle, heraldic honours for himself."

"A deed not so easy of accomplishment, as the mere dragging of a timid maiden from the troubled waters of a shallow stream," said Julian.

"Fie, Julian, fie—you are mad, or jealous, or both. Curb your temper, lest I repent me of the

indulgences, which, as the only child of thy long lost mother, I have, too weakly perchance, bestowed upon you."

Julian did not answer his father; but put spurs to his horse, and rode forward in silence, until they reached Ashley-Combe. He alighted at the hall door, threw his bridle to Alick Pearson, and sought his sleeping-room, where he exchanged his disguise for his usual morning suit. He then summoned Janet, the lodge-keeper's daughter, and learnt from her the method by which she, assisted by the servants, had so greatly alarmed Pym's stalwart troopers, after drugging their night-possets.

But we must leave Ashley-Combe, and return to Dunster Castle.

As soon as the Bachells had left the Castle, Master Luttrell took Hugh de Mohun aside, and inquired of him the cause of the evident displeasure of Julian, and his own proud looks of defiance.

Hugh answered, and answered truly, that he could not account, in any way, for Julian's conduct, unless it arose from a feeling, now that their folly was over, that, by his persuasions, he had been

induced to take such a share in the forbidden sports and pastimes as would eventually bring himself and his father into danger and perhaps disgrace. He freely owned that he had been wrong in resenting his friend's intemperate conduct, and promised to be more guarded for the future.

Master Luttrell kept his eye fixed on the countenance of Hugh, while he answered him; and was convinced, from every look and lineament, that he had not tried to deceive him, and that he really knew of no cause, beyond the one he had suggested, for Julian's display of ill-temper. He left him, therefore, with a request that he would resume his ordinary dress, and join the family at the dinner-table, at noon.

Hugh de Mohun gladly availed himself of an opportunity for retiring for a while: he was anxious to learn from some of his companions of the previous day the particulars of the attack on Pym and the Puritans, and to ascertain what their plans were for the future; in order to avoid the punishment which Pym and his party in parliament would doubtless inflict upon those, who had

so rudely set their orders at defiance and torn up their warrant.

He did not wish to pass through the town of Dunster, for many reasons, in his present costume; and, as he had left his usual every-day dress with Dame Tudball, it was necessary that he should go to Minehead to resume it; for he felt convinced, from his knowledge of the dame's temper, that she would not give up his clothes to any one but himself, and then, not without reading him a severe lecture on his folly, in having got into a scrape himself, and led her husband and Will Bowering to join him. He sought the lodge, and gained his own room, whence he let himself down, by the aid of the ivy stems, into the thicket below the gate tower. A few rapid strides brought him to the edge of the lower park, the fence of which he cleared at a bound, and, without seeing any one or being seen, gained the meadows at the back of the hostel called the Luttrell Arms.

He cautiously approached the house, and learnt from the host that Dr. Graveboys and Jansen had quitted the town, soon after they had heard from

Basil Chipera that Pym and his followers were likely to be set at liberty ; and were then some miles on their road towards Bristol, where, it was reported, some pestilent disorder was raging, which the mediciner thought not unlikely to furnish him with numerous customers.

Hugh, having learnt all the information that the host could furnish him with, again entered the park, and quickly sought the marshes below it. Through these he hurried, avoiding Alcombe and the upper town of Minehead, and so reached the residence of Giles Tudball, which was at the bottom of the town, and close to a lane leading down to the marshes and the shore. He looked about the out-premises, where the skins and hides were dressed and dried, in hopes of seeing Giles before he sought his wife ; that he might learn what sort of mood the dame was in, and what kind of reception she had given her husband, on his return from Dunster.

Neither Giles, however, nor any of his men were to be seen ; so Hugh had no other course to pursue, but to knock at the door of the dwelling-house, and ask for Dame Tudball.

"Keep the outside, keep the outside, Master Hugh, not a footfall of yours shall ever be heard within these doors again;" screamed the dame from her window above him.

"My good dame, what have I done to offend you?" said Hugh, with a sorrowful face, and in humble tones.

"Don't good me, or dame me—or speak to me—you, you ne'er-do-well—is it not enough that you make a fool of yourself by your mummings, and your junketings, and your wrestlings, and other ungodly sports, but you must lead my good man—fool that he is—into scrapes and fightings, and perhaps into prison? Get you gone, and never let me see the face of you more."

When the dame had uttered these words as rapidly as she could, she shut the casement with such force, that two or three quarries of glass were shaken from their frames, and came crashing on the ground at Hugh's feet.

"See there again," shouted the dame through the vacant leads, "ill-luck attends you, wherever you come or go, and I hope it will bide by you for life—I do."

"Nay, good, kind dame, mind not this trifle, I will send one that shall soon repair the damage at my cost; and my good dame, do just tell me where I may see Giles, for I have news for him, and let me in to exchange these garments for my student's dress," said Hugh.

The dame left the casement for a few seconds and then returned to it, and when she had opened it, she threw out Hugh's clothes in a bundle, and bade him "trudge elsewhere with them; for into her house he should never set foot again."

"And will you not tell me where I may see Giles, dame? his safety may depend on my seeing him," said Hugh.

"Safety? and what care I for his safety? he may as well be in a prison as junketing in an ale-house, instead of being at home with his wife and attending to his business."

"Is he at the Plume of Feathers in the upper town, or at—"

"If you want him, you may seek him, and the search will not be a hard one, to one who knows his haunts and habits," said the offended lady,

again closing the casement, but with less violence than before.

Hugh did not wait to see if the dame would repent, and let him in to change his dress, but sought the stable, and, mounting the ladder leading to the hay-loft above it, converted it into a dressing-room, and, when he had changed his clothes, he hid his sailor's dress behind some bundles of fodder. He then returned to the beach, and, following its windings, gained the pier, and entered the Ship-aground, at its head. There he found Giles, Will Bowering, and several more, listening to Richard Luckes and his wife, who had not long returned home from Ashley-Combe, and were entertaining their friends and customers with an account of all that had taken place there, previously to their return.

Hugh de Mohun seated himself amongst them, and, when they had exchanged all the information they were possessed of or required, it was agreed that no further steps should be taken in the business, until they should hear, which they would doubtless do, through Master Luttrell or Master

Bachell, what means of punishment Pym, and the parliament, at his instigation, would adopt.

This agreement was sealed by a tankard of foaming ale, of which all partook largely but the old harbour-master, who, complaining of its being somewhat cold to his stomach, was furnished with some strong waters, at the expense of Master Robert Quirke.

Hugh then withdrew, taking Giles Tudball with him, and, as soon as they had gained the beach, gave him so vivid a description of the reception he had met with from the dame, and the sort of humour she was in, that Giles determined to set out upon one of those inland expeditions, in which he frequently indulged under various pretences.

Hugh tried to dissuade him from doing so, lest his prolonged absence should make his good woman more irate; but Giles knew that, if he allowed it time, her temper would cool, especially if he made good use of his absence, and returned home with a full purse.

Hugh, therefore left him, after he had told him to let Will Bowering seek for and take care of his

sea-suit, and retraced his steps to Dunster Castle, whither he arrived, without any one but Basil Chipera knowing of his absence, in good time for the mid-day meal.

CHAPTER XVII.

MASTER Thomas Luttrell and Master Bachell, were busily engaged in preparing such of their tenants as were of age to bear arms, in the exercise of the pike, rapier, and pistol. The men were furnished with horses, and mustered regularly on certain days, and not dismissed until they had performed certain evolutions on horseback, and certain exercises on foot, which were deemed necessary by their respective officers. So great was the zeal displayed, especially by the younger men, who thoroughly hated and detested the Roundheads, that a few weeks sufficed to render many a hand, which had hitherto only guided a plough or wielded a whip, fully capable of managing a pike, and using the

small-sword and heavier cavalry sabre. The neighbouring gentry too, who had heard of the proceedings at Culbone revels and their results, followed the example set them by the lords of Dunster and Ashley-Combe, with whom they lived on the most friendly terms, and armed their tenants and dependents. A little army was thus formed and prepared to defend themselves and their leaders, against any hostile measures on the part of Master John Pym of Cutcombe, or King Pym,—a title by which he had then become generally known.

These warlike precautions, however, seemed to be unnecessary; for nothing was heard either of Pym or the Parliament, with reference to the illegal acts of the Culbone revellers, or the imprisonment of the constables by the Dunster men. Pym and the Parliament were, in fact, too much busied with affairs of State, to find time to think of so trifling a matter as a breach of their authority in a little, out-of-the-way nook, in the West. Pym was engaged in daily conferences with the Scottish covenanters, and in laying their complaints and wishes before the house of commons. The commons were occupied in receiving messages

from the king, who was then at York, and in framing such answers as should involve him deeper and deeper in the meshes of a policy, which, they began to see, would end in open rebellion, and the curtailment, if not the utter extinction, of the regal power. The royalist members, few in number, but all good men, and true to their sovereign, vainly endeavoured to stem the tide of treason, flowing in so fiercely against them. They formed but a miserable minority, and their voices, when raised in defence of their lawful sovereign, were drowned by the overwhelming shouts of his opponents. Many of them, who foresaw that words would lead, and shortly too, to blows, left London for their country homes, where they either levied forces to be in readiness for the approaching struggle, or, having collected all their serviceable followers, joined the king as speedily as they could.

Pym had not forgotten the insults he had met with at Culbone and Dunster: he bided his time, thinking that an opportunity would shortly occur of punishing those with greater severity than he could do at present, who had despised his authority and imprisoned himself and his followers.

Had he been inclined to be oblivious on the subject, he had those about him who did not fail to refresh his memory. The preacher, Robert Browne, and the bailiff of Dunster, Roger Priver, had positively refused to return to their homes, until such measures had been carried into effect as should ensure them from further vengeance from the malignants of Dunster and its neighbourhood. Pym, not choosing to leave them at Cutcombe, lest the unrestrained licentiousness of their speech should provoke an attack, that might endanger the safety of his family, bade them follow him to London, and upon their arrival, appointed Master Browne to be the private chaplain to his household, and Roger Priver to act as superintendent, or officer, over a small body of men, whom he had armed and kept about his person. Pym was a courageous man, and belonged to a party that was in favour, especially with the lower orders of London and Westminster; but, since the very prominent part he had taken in procuring the execution of Strafford, he had, more than once, been attacked in his passage from his residence to the house of commons. He had defended himself bravely and successfully against these

attacks; but his friends, who knew his value to the cause they were advocating, had prevailed upon him to make the assurance of his safety doubly sure by going down to Westminster, surrounded by such a body of men as should deter his enemies—who, of course were called the myrmidons of Charles Stuart, papistical malignants—from making further aggressions on his person.

Like Xerxes, with his minister by his side, bidding him daily, to 'Remember the Athenians,' Pym was daily reminded by his chaplain and the officer of his body-guard not to forget the malignants of Dunster and Ashley-Combe.

"How long? how long?" would Master Browne cry, as he raised his eyes to the ceiling, at the conclusion of his graces before and after meat, "How long? how long shall the men of Duntser and of Porlock triumph ungodly?"

"How long? how long—will the parliament permit its officer's ill-treatment, and the destruction of its warrant of authority, by the hand of prelatists and papists, to go unpunished?" would Roger Priver Snuffle daily into his master's ears, as he rode by his side down to the house of commons.

Pym could do no more to appease the eagerness of his followers, than to bid them have patience, until weightier matters were disposed of; a reply that invariably produced a deep groan from the breasts of those, who were panting for vengeance on their foes, and whose hatred grew the fiercer, the longer the execution of their vengeance was delayed.

But we must leave London and public events for the present, and return to Dunster Castle.

Although Master Luttrell was much occupied in levying and training his troops, he was not unmindful of the promise that he had made to Hugh de Mohun, that his ward, the fair Prudence Everard, should represent on canvass her escape from the waters of the Hone river. Prudence was skilful in painting, and, as Mistress Luttrell was constantly by her side, when Hugh sat for his portrait, she could see nothing objectionable or improper in the execution of the pleasing task which her guardian had set her. The picture proceeded but slowly, it is true; for the palette was frequently laid aside for a ramble in the gardens, or on the keep;

—for a gallop over the park and the surrounding Tors ; but still more frequently, for the enjoyment of conversation and music,—an art in which also Prudence excelled. Still it progressed, to the satisfaction of good Master Luttrell, who, though by no means a connoisseur in the art of limning, could not fail to acknowledge his fair ward's success in representing on the canvass the features of her preserver.

To Hugh de Mohun, these days passed as if they had been a succession of joyous dreams. His worthy tutor, Robert Snelling, was too busily engaged in writing a treatise in defence of the imprisoned Laud, to devote much of his time to his pupil's improvement. He, therefore, contented himself with pointing out to him such passages in the ancient poets and historians as he wished him to study during the day, and Basil Chipera, did not deem it any part or portion of his duty to inform the tutor, that the pupil was so remarkably quick at study, as to be able to conquer the difficulties of his authors in a very short space of time.

Master Luttrell was, as we have seen, much employed in training his followers, and Mistress Luttrell had many duties to attend to, in her nursery, and in other parts of her establishment, besides watching the growing attachment of two young persons, or rather of exercising a duenna-like *surveillance* over them, lest an attachment should be formed between a young orphan girl entrusted to her charge, and a young man, of whose origin and prospects in life she was by no means fully informed. Hugh de Mohun and Prudence Everard were, therefore, left much together—but not alone; for the little Alice Luttrell, a lovely child, about twelve years of age, and her brother William, about a twelvemonth younger than she was, were almost constantly their companions, both in the library and in their walks and rides.

It happened one day, some three weeks after the doings recorded in the commencement of our tale, that Hugh de Mohun rode with Prudence Everard to a spot in the park of Dunster, which was a favourite resort of theirs, although it bore but an ill name with the superstitious peasantry

around. On the side of a hill, named Grabhurst, stood a bright, clear pool of water, called St. Leonard's Well. It was partly enclosed by a stone wall, and roofed over, to protect it from the inroads of the deer and the cattle, which would have polluted, by their trampling, the pure stream that supplied the town and Castle with water. The walls and roof were thickly covered with luxuriant ivy, and around it, grew a circle of lofty trees, which extended their mighty branches about them, as if to shelter and protect the humbler thorns, which flourished beneath their shade.

The waters of St. Leonard's Well were reputed to be possessed of healing powers; if drunk or used externally, at their pure source, they were said to stay fevers and to prevent blindness. It was, however, necessary to invoke the aid of St. Leonard, before using or drinking of the waters of his fountain, and that too, either before the sun's rays had shone upon them, or after they had ceased to reflect his beams. Early in the morning or late in the evening, the water was efficacious; but, if taken when the glare of day was upon it, it lost

its healing properties. Many, who would have gladly tested the medicinal powers of St. Leonard's Well, were deterred from doing so by a story that was current in the neighbourhood, that Mistress Leckey, "the grey woman of Minyeard," had of late taken it under her especial protection, and taken up her abode within the grove that surrounded it. The few peasants, more resolute than their friends, who had ventured to drink there at the prescribed hours, had heard strange noises amidst the trees, and seen something grey hovering about the thick may-bushes. Some had even gone so far as to assert, that they had distinctly seen, and been plainly spoken to, by the grey woman, who bade them, as they valued her pleasure or displeasure, not venture a second time to disturb her in her quiet retreat.

In spite of these reports, Hugh de Mohun and Prudence Everard made frequent visits to the well of St. Leonard; for the ride thither was over green, velvety turf, and the view from it was very beautiful. They could tether their ponies to the thorn-bushes, and allow them to crop the luxuriant grass that grew around them; and, seated on the

at the pebbles, which shone like diamonds
bottom of the bright, and bubbling stream.

It was on one of the loveliest even-
“sweetest month of all the year”—May.
Mohun and Miss Everard, arriving at
canter at the grove which surrounded
dismounted from their forest ponies, and
them by their bridles to one of the
thorns that grew there. The children
too; but, after amusing themselves, for
time, by plucking the may-boughs, and
with their bloom, mounted again, with
knowledge of their friends, and set off
upon the soft, noiseless turf. Prudence
self on one of the stones at the entrance
conduit, and de Mohun stood by her side
his back against the dark green leaves

and extensive prospect before them, and in listening to the nightingales and other song birds, that were warbling their evening hymns in the thicket adjoining.

"I wonder, de Mohun," said Prudence Everard, at length breaking silence, and pointing with her riding wand towards the Channel, "I wonder if what I have read of foreign lands be true. Can southern France, the banks of the Rhine, or the shores of the pure-skied Italy, so much surpass in beauty the prospect which now lies before us?"

"I can scarcely think it," replied Hugh, "and yet, I have imagined it, when reading the glowing descriptions of those who have travelled in the lands, and about the spots you name. Never have I, I must confess it, seen this and other spots so beautiful as within these last few days;—it must be this splendid weather, that causes every thing to look so bright and beautiful."

Prudence Everard sighed slightly as she owned that she too, in her frequent visits to Dunster Castle, had never seen the country around look so lovely as it had lately appeared to her.

calm and placid waters of the Channel,
may fancy reflected as pure a sky as It
of. And see here again, to the right
last rays bring out boldly, in relief,
cesses and tall forests of our Tors,
not yield in height or majesty to the
ted hills of Rhineland. Below us too,
scene, such as southern France cannot
with all her beauties, greatly surpass :
olives we cannot boast ; but those rich
meads, surrounded by lofty elms and
dotted here and there, with flocks and
the bright green ribbons of the springing
sess such charms for English eyes, that
would not willingly exchange them, for w
but the fabled glories of other and stran

“ Can those other strange lands, of
snack, when we are all”

sky; and Conygar too,—its pine-clad sides may fairly emulate, though not upon so grand a scale, the sombre groves of northern England. It is *very* beautiful;” said Prudence Everard.

“It is very, very beautiful,” repeated Hugh, and yet the time has not long passed, since I was willing,—ay and anxious,—to exchange these our lovely home-views, and hitherto peaceful lands, for other countries and far different scenes. Now, methinks, I would not leave this happy spot,—this quiet, calm life—for worlds of wealth, or the proudest titles which fame could confer upon me. Would that I were the owner of these fair domains!”

“And why?” said Prudence, turning her dark blue eyes inquiringly on her companion.

“Miss Everard,” answered Hugh, as he took the hand which rested on an ivy branch by his side, “if I were the lord of these domains, and master of this fair hand, I would not exchange positions with—”

“Nay—nay, my friend—for such I may innocently call my preserver—” said Prudence Ever-

ard, rising, and endeavouring to withdraw her hand, "this is language to which I must not,—cannot listen. Remember de Mohun, I am young—an orphan, and, as I believe, dependent on the bounties of my friends—nay, leave me, I entreat you—release my hand."

"Miss Everard—Prudence Everard, hear me but one word. I love you—love you, with all the fervour of a heart in which passion has never yet held sway—with all the purity of a virgin affection—nay, turn not away until you have heard me out. Never again will I alarm you with an offer of my love—never entreat you to own an affection for me, until I can do so fairly and honourably, and with the obtained sanction of your friends and guardians. A cloud hangs over me at present, which I will speedily dispel, and when I have ascertained and obtained my rank and fortune, both shall be laid at your feet. Tell me—tell me I entreat you, if de Mohun proves himself of unblemished descent, and the owner of goodly lands, will Miss Everard entrust the happiness of her future years to his keeping?"

"Never—never! the base-born never can be united to the last of the noble Everards."

These words were spoken in a deep, yet shrill voice, which seemed to proceed from the very centre of the well. They were spoken slowly and distinctly—word by word—almost syllable by syllable. Prudence Everard stood still, and turned as pale as the waters at her feet. Hugh de Mohun dropped the hand he held, and gazed into the recesses of the well, as if he expected to find some one concealed within them. It was unoccupied, save by the bubbling waters. He passed rapidly round the building, and then rushed into the grove which surrounded it. No human being was within sight.

"The children!—Alice—William—the children! de Mohun, where are they?"

"Here we are, dear Prudence," said little Alice, "we have had a race, and my dear Sylvia has beaten Willy's Trotty—oh, so much, you cannot think."

"Ay, but your Sylvia is higher by a hand, than poor Trotty, and you had the best start," said the boy.

"Saw you no one near us, as you rode down to the well?" asked Hugh.

"No one," said Alice. "Indeed, if any one had been at the well, we could not have seen them."

"Why not, dearest?" asked Prudence Everard.

"Oh," said Willy, "there was a grey sort of mist all about it, that at a distance, looked for all the world like an old woman in a grey cloak."

"We had better return home, Miss Everard," said Hugh: "the evening dew is rising."

Prudence, declining the proffered assistance of de Mohun, mounted the pony, and the party rode, almost in silence, to Dunster Castle.

CHAPTER XVIII.

It was nearly dark when Hugh de Mohun parted with Prudence Everard and the children, at the small postern, which led from the quadrangle in front of the Castle to the long range of stabling. He did not bid them farewell for the night, as he intended to join them at the supper-table. Supper, that most sociable of all meals, for it is partaken of after the cares and labours of the day are over,—was served about eight o'clock; and the children were not unfrequently allowed to sit up and partake of it, especially if they could engage the interest of Prudence Everard as a canvasser in their favour.

Hugh was not a little chafed in his temper, at Miss Everard's having declined his services to assist her from her saddle: a few moments

however, sufficed to enable him to smooth his ruffled brow. As he rode homewards, by the side of her he loved, the words of the mysterious voice at the well had rung in his ears, and given rise to thoughts more painful than had ever pervaded his mind before. He had endeavoured to bring to his recollection all the scenes of his earliest days. He tried to remember the features of those who were around him in his infancy; but, beyond a shadowy outline of a tall, dark lady, who had once or twice received him into her bosom from the arms of his old nurse, and the dim features of another domestic, no impressions remained on his memory.

Was he base-born? how should he solve the problem? His aged nurse was he knew not where. She might be buried for all he knew, and, with her, the secret of his birth. His tutor, Master Snelling, was doubtless furnished with full information on the subject; but was he at liberty to disclose what he knew?—He would seek him and question him closely.

Acting upon this resolve, Hugh, when he had

quitted his companions, crossed the quadrangle, and, with impatient strides, rushed down the steep pathway which led to the gate tower, wherein his tutor lodged. The arched door-way, which gave access to the interior, and was usually open, was now closed, and the door itself fastened. Hugh knocked impatiently upon it with the butt of his riding-whip, but could obtain no reply to his summons. Again and again, and with increasing loudness, were the blows repeated, but to no purpose. He looked up to the window of the room in which his tutor usually studied and wrote, but no light shone from its quarried casement; he went to the farther side of the tower, and, climbing to his own window, by means of the strong ivy stems, tried to gain access to his apartment in his usual way; but the iron-bound casement was securely fastened within, and he was forced to descend without accomplishing his object. He then, knocked and shouted at a small aperture, which gave light to the lower room, usually occupied by Basil Chi-pera; but no response was granted to him.

Bestowing any thing but a benediction on the

should find his tutor busily engaged in the library ; a spot that held out so many temptations to the good old man, that, when once he had entered within its walls, Master Chipewagon's absence for some hours would not be a circumstance by which he did not fail to profit.

A small side door from the garden he had a key, admitted him to a passage leading to the library. He opened the inner door, and the room in total darkness. Well knowing the localities, he crossed it, and made his way to the entrance hall, and thence to the large library and quieting room, where he found several servants preparing for the evening meal. On making enquiries for his tutor, he was answered, that Mr Snelling had set off that afternoon, with

some of the most valuable and

Church put into print; and had left word that Hugh de Mohun should employ himself in the library, and take up his residence within the Castle, until his return.

Great was the disappointment, but the young man bore it manfully; for he was aware that his tutor's absence would not be prolonged beyond the ensuing Saturday, as his duties would require his presence on the Sunday. He took a rapid walk on the terrace of the gardens, to allay his irritated feelings; and, when calmness was restored to his mind, he joined the family of his friend at the supper table, with an unbeating heart and unruffled forehead.

"I wonder," said Mistress Luttrell, "that Julian Bachell hath been so long an absentee from these walls, which in his childhood were to him as a second home."

"He has been, and is still, busied in assisting his father in raising the tenantry, and perfecting them in their exercises," said Master Luttrell. "King Charles has not a more zealous soldier, in his dominions, than the young Julian. Did he consider his father safe in his absence, he would ere

as he stood behind his master's high-l

"Master Julian was at the Castle this

"And why came he not in, as was inquired the lady.

"An it please you, madam, he dismount; but when I told him that M de Mohun was absent, riding in the Mistress Everard, he turned his horse tending, as I deemed, to join them."

"Saw you nought of him?" asked trell.

"We did not see him," replied Hug might easily have missed us had he for Dunster park is no paddock to over in some hour or so."

"Had he ridden to Grabhurst, we seen him," said Alice, "for Willy and

The colour rose vividly in the cheeks of Hugh and Prudence Everard at this simple remark, their eyes met for a moment, and were then firmly fixed on the cloth that covered the board. Mistress Luttrell glanced from one to the other and then at her husband ; but her looks were not heeded by the latter, as he was busily employed with the viands before him ; and an observation " that Master Bachell had doubtless failed to find his friend de Mohun and ridden home again," put an end to further speculation on the subject.

Supper over, Master Luttrell requested Prudence to take her seat at the instrument, and sing to him one of his favourite songs. She readily complied ; but did not sing with her usual spirit. In a duet with Hugh de Mohun, which they had so often sung together as to be perfect in it, Prudence sang in so flat a tone, and the voices were so far from harmonizing, that Mistress Luttrell could not refrain from asking her ward if she were ill.

Prudence owned that she did not feel quite well, and feared she might have taken a slight cold, from riding in the evening dews.

Mistress Luttrell kissed the fair cheek of her ward, as she stood beside her, and, in a whisper, told her that she thought such late and distant rides had better not be repeated; and then bade her seek relief from her indisposition in sleep.

Prudence retired immediately, and Hugh would fain have done so too, for his quick ear had caught the whispered advice of Mistress Luttrell; but he was detained for some two tedious hours, listening to the unentertaining detail, anent the progress made in military matters by his newly raised troop, delivered by his host, between the puffs of his silver-mounted pipe.

The harangue, however, ended with the third pipe, and Hugh, after having learned that the parson of Dunster would return from Bristol so soon as he had seen his manuscript placed in the printer's hands, and given the necessary directions for having the proof sheets forwarded to him, retired to his bed, to think over the events of the day.

When Prudence Everard had reached her sleeping room, she dismissed her maid immediately; declining her services for the night, under the

plea of a violent head-ache. When the maid had left her, however, she did not commence her preparations for retiring to rest, but sat down near the window, and gently opened the casement. The fresh air from without blew chilly upon her, but the very chilliness was a relief to her. Her brain seemed heated, her forehead throbbed, and the coolness of the night wind spread refreshingly over her temples, and seemed to allay their painful throbbings.

She sat for some time, thinking of the interview with Hugh de Mohun at St. Leonard's Well, and of the strange voice and words, which had closed it so fearfully and abruptly. Maiden-like, she blushed, though no eye was near to see her, when she thought of the sudden declaration of love poured into her ear by her preserver, and resolutely examined her heart, to see if its pure recesses harboured more than a friendly and grateful feeling towards him.

What the result of the self-imposed examination might have been, it is impossible to say ; for, ere it came to a conclusion, the fair girl felt a hand

laid gently on her shoulder, and heard the gentle voice of her guardian and more than mother whisper a chiding into her ear, for endangering her health by exposing herself to the damp dews of night.

"Nay, dearest madam," said Prudence, raising Mistress Luttrell's hand to her lips, "no harm will befall me from these pure breezes; indeed they have done me good already, for my head did ache and—"

"Art sure, dearest, that this little heart is not more affected than the head?" said Mistress Luttrell, drawing her to her, and placing her arm round her slender waist, so that her hand rested on her heart.

Prudence tried to withdraw from her embrace, but her guardian, using a gentle violence, held her firmly, while she questioned her in a low voice, as to what had passed between her and Hugh de Mohun, at the fountain of St. Leonard.

After a slight struggle with herself, Prudence revealed, ingenuously, every thing that had passed between them; and so vividly was the scene

impressed upon her memory, that the very words used by Hugh and herself at the well, were repeated to the attentive ear of her guardian.

"I have been to blame," said Mistress Luttrell, as she released the blushing girl from her embrace, and drew her upon a couch by her side; "I only have been to blame: I ought to have been aware of and guarded against the danger of leaving two young hearts, ignorant of the world and of themselves, to the influence of a passion, likely to be engendered by gratitude for a life preserved on the one hand, and on the other, by a noble, a manly feeling of satisfaction, at having been the preserver of so fair a form as this."

Prudence Everard threw herself on Mistress Luttrell's bosom and sobbed.

"Yet why should I blame myself? Prudence Everard, I feel for you as a mother would feel: I do not believe that my love for mine own child, my youthful Alice, surpasses the love I feel for you,—you, who, motherless and fatherless, an orphan indeed, are left to my protection. Were Alice arrived at your time of life, and had she been

preserved from almost certain death by so noble a youth as Hugh de Mohun, could I—"

"But the words—those fatal, mysteriously uttered words—'base-born,' can they be true, dearest lady?" said Prudence, raising her face and gazing fixedly at her guardian.

"Imagination, dearest,—fancy—must have deceived you," said Mistress Luttrell.

"Nay, lady, I heard them pronounced too slowly and distinctly, ever to attribute them to fancy or imagination," said Prudence.

"Some prying spy must have been at hand, and maliciously or playfully, uttered them, in order to alarm you."

"Not so—it is impossible; you know the spot well; excepting the rock-covered well itself, and the small group of trees and bushes which surround it, all is open hill about it, there is not so much as a thicket to hide a hare, within half a mile of it," said Prudence, earnestly.

"And may not the recess of the well, or the overhanging mound, have concealed some wandering eaves-dropper?"

"No, dearest madam, for Hugh de Mohun examined both, speedily and accurately; and the children, who were returning to us at the moment, must have seen any one who had fled from the spot, which was found uninhabited by aught, save ourselves," said Prudence.

"Well, dearest, well," said Mistress Luttrell, "I have no superstitious feelings myself, neither I think, have you. I have no doubt that we shall find some earthly solution of the difficulty which now puzzles us. But we will sleep upon these and other matters, and talk them over calmly and rationally in the morning; and, as to the nobility of de Mohun's birth, rest assured, that our doubts on that subject can be, and shall be, set at rest by good Master Robert Snelling on his return to the Castle.

As she uttered these words, the fair guardian kissed her fairer ward's lips, and bade her seek that repose which her agitated spirits required.

Prudence closed her casement, drew her curtains, and was speedily undressed, and soliciting the approach of sleep to her harassed mind;

hours, however, passed before she really slept, and then it was but to dream as she slept.

First and foremost, she dreamed that she was again in the cutter; the winds were howling around her, the cordage whistling wildly in her ears, and the waves madly lashing the sides of the groaning vessel, as it lay on its side upon the sands. Again the welcome blaze of the beacon was seen, holding out a hope of safety and of succour. Again did she, by its bright flashes, see the boat upset in its attempts to reach them; and still more clearly, the bold plunge of Hugh de Mohun into the boiling waters, and his vigorous struggles to gain the wreck. Again was she precipitated with him into the waves, and mistrusted his manful endeavours to convey her safely to the shore. She felt his warm breath upon her cold cheek, as he chafed her into life again, and repeated her grateful thanks for the preservation of her life.

Anon the vision changed. The well—the burning words of love, poured into her virgin ears, and the awful warning, so mysteriously uttered, were vividly before her—strange, unearthly figures peo-

pled the spot, menacing her with gibbering faces, and amongst them, most conspicuous, the grey woman of Minehead, such in appearance as she had heard her described by the credulous peasantry.

The vision changed again. She was in a strange country—far different in its appearance from her beloved Somersetshire; instead of the lovely valleys, the lofty Tors, and the noble Channel, she beheld a flat, uninteresting scene, on which grew a few stunted willows, beside a narrow sluggish stream. It seemed a picture of desolation; suddenly, however, it became peopled. From two opposite directions, dense bodies of armed men issued—they rushed to the encounter; and, amidst the roar of cannon, and fierce cries of vengeance, the shrieks of the wounded and the groans of the dying came clearly defined upon her ear. Like the figures of the optician's instrument, these melted gradually away, and left two men only standing in the midst of what had been two armies. Foot to foot—hand to hand they stood, striving like demons for each other's life. The bright sparks flew from their swords, as they thrust or cut

his breast, a white-plumed hat ten ho-
ly-clad brows, and disclosed to her the
Hugh de Mohun. The foe, who wor-
of the king's enemies, but whose fac-
be seen, again raised his arm to repe-
Prudence shrieked out—"Spare him!"
Ere she could recover her scattered sens-
she found Mistress Luttrell by her s-
upon her wonderingly and tenderly.

"What ails my child?"

"I did but dream," said Prudence,
dream, and a fearful dream it was;—
but a dream, and I will rise immediatel-

She tried to fulfil her resolve, but,
made the attempt, a sickly feeling came
her head seemed to reel round and
trembled violently, and fell back on
senseless.

them vain, became alarmed, and dispatched a servant for medical aid. The surgeon, on his arrival, and after due examination of the pulse, pronounced the disorder to be an attack of fever, or of that hideous disease, the small-pox ; but he could not tell which.

The rumour that the fair Prudence Everard was seriously, nay dangerously, ill was soon spread about within the Castle and in the town. The last person who heard the report was the one whom it most concerned to learn it. Hugh de Mohun had risen early, and left the Castle for the well of St. Leonard, determined to pass the day by the side of its waters, to see if, perchance, he could solve the mystery of the voice which had pronounced him to be base-born.

CHAPTER XIX.

HUGH de Mohun did not stir from his position beside St. Leonard's Well, until the shades of evening fell gloomily over its waters. He had provided himself with a book and some means of refreshment, in order to enable him to keep his resolve, not to quit the spot until the hour should have arrived, at which the being, earthly or un-earthly, had proclaimed him to be base-born, and as such, unworthy of the hand of Prudence Everard.

The hours passed away slowly and silently; no sound was heard, from morning until eve, but the gentle murmurings of the stream, as it trickled from its rock-covered recess into the channel which

conveyed it to its destination, and the voices of the birds, as they warbled forth their melodies in the grove.

"I need wait no longer," said Hugh, as he placed his book in his bosom, "but, before I quit this spot, I will betake me to a little distance on the hill, to see if the same appearance will present itself to my eyes, as was seen by Alice and William Luttrell."

Hugh slowly mounted the steep ascent, keeping as nearly as he could, in the path by which the children had descended, which the traces of the footsteps of their ponies pointed out to him. When he reached the summit, he turned round and gazed eagerly at the well.

"By heaven!—but it is strange—well may the ignorant, uneducated peasant deem the mist which shrouds the well to be the wraith of Mistress Leckey! It hath a wondrous similitude to the figure of a grey-clad witch. See it moves its arm and beckons to me: I will not be churlish enough, not to attend its summons."

A few seconds sufficed to bring the active youth

to the spot which he had so recently quitted, and, as he suspected, the nearer he approached it, the fainter the vision grew, and, when he arrived at the well, not a particle of mist was visible.

"That riddle is solved." said Hugh, "the waters and the moist ground, render the air cooler here than elsewhere, and consequently, a vapour, in a state of condensation, hovers over the spot, and is visible at a distance. But the voice?—I would I could solve that mystery as easily."

"What ho ! Hillioah ! hillioah !" screamed a voice close to the well.

Hugh started, and laid his hand on a pistol which was concealed within his tunic. He looked about him, but no one was to be seen.

"Whoever or whatever you are—appear!"

"Hillioah—hillioah !—Master Hugh—Master Hugh !"

"Whoever calls me, I am here. Come forth, appear!" shouted Hugh greatly excited.

"Here, indeed—I would that you had been there, down at the Castle, and saved my old knees, and my panting lungs so great an exertion ;—din-

nerless you have been, and supperless you will be, unless you hasten back to the Castle, where every thing is at sixes and sevens, because forsooth, Mistress Everard is ill and light-headed, and Master Hugh is well and light of foot, and been missing all day, and I forsooth am to be sent, old as I am, because the fools below, have not courage to look upon an old woman in a grey cloak—to search St. Leonard's Well for a straying student."

"How came you hither, Jefferies?" asked Hugh earnestly, of the aged butler.

"On foot, on foot, and a toilsome climb I have had of it. But young Mistress Alice would make me go seek you here; for, as she said, she knows you love to haunt this spot, in spite of the grey woman of Minehead, who is said to haunt it too."

"But I saw you not as you approached, and I was on the hill above," said Hugh.

"Folks must have sharp eyes that can see through a thick mist and a mound of thorns and oaks," said the butler; "but come, your presence is needed at the Castle; for the young Mistress Everard is suffering from your having impru-

dently detained her in the dews of yester-evening, and is seriously fevered and beside herself."

"Prudence Everard ill! I and away—let us hasten Jefferies, let us hasten, and you can tell me of her ailments as we go along—how, when, where, was she taken ill? speak."

"Nay, if you gallop down hill at so fast a pace, you must needs answer your own questions, for the little breath I have left will not suffice me to run and talk too," said Jefferies.

"Then I will leave you to return at your leisure, and will seek my information from others," said Hugh, as he darted forward and left the old man to follow him as he best could.

He found, from Mistress Luttrell, that Prudence was dangerously ill, and heard from Master Luttrell, that her mind was wandering, and that her thoughts, if they could judge of them by her rambling words, were busied with fears of his exposure to some unpronounced danger, and with some unearthly vision which she had seen at St. Leonard's Well.

Hugh de Mohun was greatly shocked at these

ill-tidings, and grieved to think he should not have heard of her illness before. He fully explained to his friends why he had been absent until so late an hour, and was applauded by both of them for having endeavoured to discover the person who had so wrongfully insulted him, and so cruelly alarmed Miss Everard.

"But the physician—what report does he make? is he skilful? does he give any hopes?" said Hugh eagerly.

"He repeats," said Mistress Luttrell, "that a fever, the result of cold or excitement, or something else, is raging in the veins of my dear ward."

"Is that all the information his skill enables him to give? he must be an ass—an ignorant ass," said Hugh.

"Nay, he is sufficiently skilful for a country mediciner, and shews his wisdom by not assigning any specific cause for his patient's disorder," said Master Luttrell, smiling at Hugh's earnestness.

"But the result? does he give any hopes of a speedy recovery? tell me, dear madam," said Hugh.

tively."

"Dear madam," said Hugh, "had ye ter seek further advice? this medicine village apothecary : every moment is of sequence, let me mount a horse, and see aid."

"You will be puzzled to find it, Hugh, than Taunton, or Bridgewater, but re of this, that, should it be needful, further be procured. Now to supper—that my may return to watch over the slumbers of ward."

As Master Luttrell said this, he sat self at the table, and commenced his evening. Mistress Luttrell followed her husband's for she had to prepare for a night of sleeplessness. Hugh, who had lost all ap

low food while one so dear to them was lying ill. He tried to eat, but he could not, his mouth felt dry and parched. He took the wine-cup presented to him by Jefferies, and drained it to the dregs. The draught revived him, and he was enabled to inquire more calmly into many particulars of which he was still ignorant.

"So, young sir," said Master Luttrell, assuming a seriousness of brow, as soon as his lady had bidden them farewell for the night, and Jefferies had placed all that was requisite for their final refreshment, before them, "so, young sir, it seems that you have contrived, in the space of some three short weeks—"

"Very short ones—" said Hugh, "I never knew three weeks pass so speedily."

"Or so happily, I presume; but do not interrupt me. You have contrived, it would appear, in this very short space of time, to lose your own heart and gain that of my fair ward in exchange."

"That I have lost my own, I will not deny; for I cannot, with any show of truth; and I would gladly know that I had won a heart so pure and

guileless in exchange; but of that fact I have no assurance," said Hugh.

"You have confessed your love to Prudence, did you ask for hers in return? be candid, Hugh de Mohun, you speak to a friend."

"I will be candid. I have confessed my affection to Miss Everard. I would not however demand her hand, until I should have cleared up the mystery of my birth, and ascertained whether my rank and my fortune were worthy of her acceptance. Thus much I had told her, when the mysterious voice forbade our union, under the vile assurance that I was basely born."

"You have, so far, acted well and honourably, Hugh. It will be necessary that the man who weds Prudence should have both station in society and fortune to maintain his rank. She is of unsullied descent, and my duty is to see that no stain be marked upon her escutcheon. She is poor too—nay almost penniless—for her father, the last of the Everards of Luxborough, was entangled in the meshes of the law, and sold his estates to maintain a system of hospitality, which he erro-

neously deemed essential to the character of a country gentleman."

"Trust you to my honour, sir," said Hugh, proudly, "not to solicit further for the hand of your fair ward, until I find my name to be pure and unsullied, and my fortune adequate to her deserts."

"Both of which points, though doubtful at present, may, as I believe, be solved by my worthy chaplain, Master Robert Snelling, on his return."

"I would that he were here now," said Hugh.

"Time enough—time enough—for, should he solve our doubts favourably, both you and Prudence Everard are too young as yet to form a contract which is to last for life. Should your claim to the unsullied name and the wide domains of the Mohuns be made good, you shall have my consent to aspire to a union with Prudence, after she, should God spare her to us, and yourself, shall have passed three or four years in the world—"

"Three or four years!—an eternity!" said Hugh, looking amazed.

“——in order, that both of you may be sure, that none others have charms enough to make you regret your hasty choice. But stirring times, or I mistake not, are at hand. Hugh de Mohun, in your love-dreams, you have not noted the progress of events in the outer world. The king is daily, nay, hourly threatened; not only his power but his person is in danger. The Church is assailed by men, who, feigning to believe all that her enemies speak against her, are eagerly awaiting an opportunity of possessing themselves of her fair inheritance. In her defence, and in the defence of my lawful sovereign, this arm shall be exerted, and these broad lands, bequeathed to me by my ancestors, shall be willingly sacrificed, to raise and maintain troops, that will fight in their lawful king's behalf, so long as the walls of this my Castle hold together.”

“And, should such a necessity arise,” said Hugh, “I should feel a pride in ranging myself under your banner. The plume of feathers shall not be plucked from the crest of the Luttrells, while a Mohun can wield a weapon in its defence.”

"I believe thee, Hugh, and I thank thee also, nor will I fail to avail myself of your services, should they be required. I will now wish thee a good night and refreshing slumbers,—promising you the due fulfilment of my word, with respect to Prudence Everard, on the terms I have mentioned; provided that the report from the lips of good Master Snelling shall be, such as I doubt not it will be, confirmatory of your claims to an unspotted descent and suitable means for its maintenance."

Hugh shook the extended hand of his friend, and retired, but not to rest. He summoned Jeffries to his apartment, and bade him go seek the latest news of Miss Everard's condition. The answer was unfavourable; she was restless and more feverish, and the mediciner was about to take blood from her surcharged veins.

Hugh could not sleep, but threw open the case-ment of his room, and leaned out of it, as far as he could thrust his body, that the cool night-air might allay the fever, which burned within him, caused by anxiety for the safety of her whom he loved.

"I would," said he, "that Dr. Graveboys were

in the neighbourhood, for, though a mere Quack-salver, as he is termed by the professionals, his experience is great, and his drugs have wrought many and wondrous cures. I marvel where he may be found; but, if Prudence Everard be not pronounced out of risk when the morrow's sun rises, I will seek him; even should I be necessitated to journey as far as the city of Bristol for the purpose."

For some four or five hours, did the anxious youth tread his apartment, as the seaman treads the deck of his vessel in the night watch. Now and then, he gently opened his door and listened, if ought might he heard to increase or diminish his fears; all, however, was still—silent as the grave, on which, for the first time in his life, he thought sadly and seriously. At length, worn out with fruitless watching, he flung himself in his day dress on his bed, and fell into a deep and heavy slumber.

Vexed and hurt was he, when he awoke, to find the sun already far up in the heavens on his daily course; and still more vexed, when Jefferies, steal-

thily entered his apartment to tell him that Master Luttrell was awaiting him in the hall.

"Unfeeling wretch, that he must think me, to be slumbering here when, perhaps, death may be—but, Jefferies, I have passed a sleepless night, and, though the mind was wakeful, the body at last failed me," said Hugh, as he sprung from his bed. "But Prudence—Miss Everard—what report bring you of her?"

"She is no worse," said Jefferies.

"Thank God for it," said Hugh. "I will but bathe my temples, and be with you speedily."

When Jefferies had left the room, Hugh de Mohun threw himself on his knees beside his bed, and offered up a prayer for the invalid's safety and recovery; as pure and sincere as ever issued from the heart of man. He then plunged his heated brow into the cool water, and arranged his dress as speedily as possible, and joined the party assembled at the morning meal.

There was one there whom he little expected to see. Julian Bachell was seated beside Mistress Luttrell: he rose upon Hugh's entrance, and

proffered him his hand; Hugh grasped it in silence, and scarcely raised his eyes to see with what expression of feature his former friend regarded him, but, dropping it quickly, sought the side of Mistress Luttrell, to obtain a confirmation of the aged butler's assurance that Prudence Everard was not worse.

"She is not worse, de Mohun," said Mistress Luttrell. "She has passed, it is true, a troubled night, and the fever, in despite of the blood-letting, is not diminished. It is accounted a favourable symptom that it hath not increased."

"Would it not be well to seek further advice, as I suggested last evening," said Hugh.

"That is provided for," said Master Luttrell. "Julian Bachell, having heard from some Dunster men, of the ill-health of my ward, hath already despatched a messenger to Cutcombe, to ensure the services of an eminent physician of Taunton, who is still in attendance, at intervals, on the lady of Master John Pym, who is scarcely as yet convalescent."

Hugh de Mohun looked at Julian Bachell, as if to ask him how he had dared to interfere in a matter which could not concern him; and fancied that

a smile of triumph passed over his features as he returned his gaze.

But little was spoken during the remainder of the meal, save on subjects of public interest, which had so few charms for Hugh that he scarcely listened to the remarks which were made. As soon as the meal was over, he left the hall, and walked rapidly up to the keep, and looked about, upon the distant hills that stretched away towards Cutcombe, as if to see if the physician who had been summoned so unexpectedly by Julian were on his road to the Castle. No one was to be seen, except some shepherds watching their horned flocks, and Hugh turned away from that quarter in a listless manner, and wandered to and fro on the green turf of the Keep.

In his wanderings, he, without designing it, approached the arch of the ruined tower, and again gazed upon the shields and crest, which Julian had informed him were the arms borne by the Mohuns, who were formerly lords of Dunster and of many fair and broad lands besides.

“Am I entitled to wear those arms as mine by

legitimate descent, or am I not?" said Hugh, aloud; for he believed himself to be alone, and far from the hearing of any mortal being.

"Not without the bend sinister, the mark of the base-born, being drawn across them," was replied to his question, in the same loud, screaming voice as he had heard on the eventful visit to St. Leonard's Well.

"Who is it that so unhesitatingly answers my doubts?" said Hugh. "Speak—I will listen."

No further reply was made to him, and Hugh, after searching the building and the bushes around it, to see that no one was concealed within reach of him, moved away, saying, "Well, no matter, when Master Snelling returns, I shall know all."

"Ay, *when* he returns, you will know all," screamed out the same voice.

"By Heaven! it came from the ruins! some one lies concealed there: I will find him, if he be mortal, and make him repent of thus rashly taunting and insulting me," said Hugh, as he dashed under the old archway.

The decayed door gave way readily to the weight

of his person, thrown hastily upon it, and Hugh rolled in, amidst a heap of rubbish and clouds of dust, which his violent entrance had produced. His search was long but vain; no one was to be seen.

Slowly did he descend to the Castle, and anxiously did he await in the library the arrival of the Taunton physician: it was late in the day when he arrived. His visit to the sick chamber was a prolonged one; and, when he left it, he frankly stated that the chances of life and death were so nicely balanced, that he could not venture to say which way the scales would turn.

Hugh de Mohun turned sorrowfully away, when he heard what he believed to be a confirmation of his worst fears, and for that, and the succeeding day, knew not how he passed his hours, though the servants knew that he neither ate nor slept, but wandered from room to room, and passage to passage, seeking intelligence of the state of Prudence Everard.

The morning of the Saturday dawned, on which the return of Master Robert Snelling was expected.

Hugh de Mohun had ceased to wish for his return ; for what mattered it to him, whether he could proclaim him rightful heir to the Mohuns, if she, on whom he wished to confer their unblemished name and estates, were to be taken from him ? The mediciner however, announced that a favourable change had taken place in the night, and that he believed, that nature had won the battle over disease.

CHAPTER XX.

"MABEL, wench! Mabel, girl!—what ho! Mabel! the devil's in thee—Mabel, I say, come hither, and put things in order, for Master Robert Quirke's reception: that your master is mad there's no question, and your mistress is not far behind him; to think they should go tramping up to Ashley-Combe, merely to see the new-trained bands go through their exercise, under the orders of young Julian Bachell; and Master Robert Quirke, the richest habitant of Minyead, coming to pass his evening, and smoke his pipe at the Ship Aground!" said Master Luckes, the old harbour-master.

"Well I'm a coming, as fast as I can," said Mabel—"I must tidy myself, I suppose, before I can wait on Master Quirke."

“Ay, ay—dress, dress—nothing but dress! but not to please the eye of old Master Quirke. The St. David is expected in harbour this evening, and the folk do say that Master Jenkins’s mate, Welshman though he be, hath found favour in the eyes of Mistress Mabel. Well, well—to think that my son Richard and his wife should go gadding after a parcel of country loons, in body armour and scull-caps, instead of staying at home to receive the worshipful company of Master Quirke and the Captain of the St. David! And to lock up the buffet too, in which the strong waters are kept, when they know that their ale sits but coldly on the stomach!”

“There is ginger in plenty,” said Mabel, “my mistress will not be long ere she returns. The buffet would not be locked, did not some people apply to it so often, when they have free access to it, as to muddle the few brains that nature has provided them with.”

“Get thee gone, thou art saucy, wench,” said old Master Luckes, “get thee gone, but yet, stop—as thou sayest there is ginger in store, you may

make me a cup of warmed ale, and season it with a little spice and some sugar; it will serve me to sip until Master Quirke comes."

"Well, here he is, and in good time," said Mabel, as she showed him in; and as I live, Master Jenkins with him. I will just run and see the St. David made fast to the pier, and be back again to take their orders, as soon as they are ready to give them."

Away scudded the girl, and was soon in the embrace of her lover, the mate of the St. David; a few hurried words assured them that their love was unchanged, and a promise from the mate that he would visit her, as soon as he had made every thing snug on board, enabled Mabel to hurry back to her duties, just as old Master Luckes had called down upon her head every malediction, with which his memory supplied him.

"Nay, be not angry, Master Luckes," said both of the guests; "Mabel is a good girl, and is only gone to greet her sweetheart upon his safe return."

"She is a spy—a vile eaves-dropper and a tale-

bearer," said the old harbour-master ; " but for her tittle-tattling about my love of the Dutch bottles, I could offer you something better than the cold ale and still colder cider from my son's cellars."

" Provided the ale be good, and sufficiently spiced, it will serve my turn until Master Richard comes back," said Quirke, " so, when Mabel hath had enough talk with her lover, order her to bring us pipes and a warm tankard."

" Nay, an old Master Luckes lacketh patience to await the opening of the buffet, I can give him a dose of as good Scheidam as ever warmed his old nose," said Jenkins, producing from the folds of his large wrapping coat, a bladder containing about two quarts of the liquor the old man loved.

" Ahah—ahah," said the harbour-master, applying his lips to the mouth of the bladder, which was tied to a bit of elder, hollowed out to form a mouth-piece, " ahah ! but that is good— I will but taste it again, and then order Mabel to furnish neated water and sugar and—"

" Avast there !—steady, old fellow !" said Master Jenkins, " a bladder holds but little, and if you pull

away at it so heartily, you will leave your friends but a smell instead of a taste."

"Ah, I did but put my lips to it," said the old man; "but it hath a glueish quality about it, which makes it hang to one's mouth."

Mabel, who had hurried over her little flirtation, now came in, and furnished the guests with all that they required. They had not long lighted their pipes, and sipped their glasses, ere the host, Richard Luckes, entered, accompanied by Giles Tudball and his mate Will Bowering. Their appearance was heartily greeted by all the party; for Giles had been absent, inland, for some three weeks, and Will had only returned from a long trip over to Holland, on the day before.

"Let us make a night on it," said Giles, "I have put my old woman in a good humour, by placing a tolerably well laden purse in her hand, and Will's good woman hath such a store of goods to sort and stow away, that she will not miss her husband, should he sit up to hear the cock crowing. I have news too, my masters; news well worth the hearing, and if Master Richard will but send a trustworthy person to Will Bowering's

house, he will find there a something, in the shape of a tub of real Nantz, that will help us to pass away the time."

"I will go myself—I will not entrust it to another, for fear of accidents," said the old harbour-master. "I will but taste it, under Mistress Bowering's eye, to see that no mistake be made, and be back again anon."

"Not so—not so, sit thee still old boy; who would trust a wolf to bring home a lamb, or a kite to carry a chicken to its roost: sit thee still, and be content to have your share of the Nantz, when it shall have been safely conveyed hither."

As Master Jenkins said this, and thrust the old grog-lover back into his seat, the rueful aspect of his face was so ludicrous as to cause a burst of laughter at his expense.

"Were I not an old man and weak to boot, you would not treat me thus, Master Jenkins, you d——d Welsh skipper you; to insinuate and intimate that I would take advantage—unfair advantage—of Giles Tudball's keg! may I be—"

"Over a reeking goblet of its contents," said

Giles Tudball, "as thou shalt be, if—*if*, mind—you conduct yourself quietly and peaceably, as an old man should do."

I did but jest—Master Jenkins knows, I did but jest; but he is ever fond of trying if my English temper be as hasty as his Welsh disposition is."

"Nay, your blood is naturally cooler than mine, I allow," said Master Jenkins; "but it hath such a quantity of strong waters mingled with it, that it runneth through vein and artery in such a tide, that the cable of your discretion is liable to be parted."

"Ay, like the cable, and a strong one it was too, of the Blossom of Minyeard, which was bitten in two by a cod-fish, on the Dogger-bank, in his struggles to get off my hook," said Will Bowering.

"An that be not a lie of the first water—as they speak of diamonds—I know not what is," said Master Quirke.

"I will swear to the truth of it," said Will, "for I saw the fish with mine own eyes. It was at least three yards in length, and had teeth, to the full as long as my fingers."

A loud roar of laughter pacified old Master Luckes, and silenced Will Bowering. The host entered with a jorum of hot grog, the pipes were filled and lighted, and, after a few puffs and a few sips, to enable them to ascertain if the weed and the liquor were really good, Master Quirke begged of Giles Tudball the disclosure of the important news at which he had hinted.

"I have been the long journey," said Giles, "and have seen much, and heard more. Perilous times are at hand, and it behoves us to be on the look-out."

"What does Master John Pym—" began the skipper of the *St. David*.

"Pym me no Pym, Master Jenkins; though king Pym, as they call him, be a great man in these parts, he is but one among the many, who are doing their best to dethrone our King and to destroy our Church. In every town and every village through which I have journeyed, I have seen such preparations making for the carrying on of a war, that I cannot but believe both parties are in earnest, and bent on trying their strength in a

struggle. I have heard and seen much from both sides; for I travelled with merchandize, and had free admission every where, and, from what I have seen and heard, parties are so nicely balanced that the struggle will be a fearful one."

"But the nobility and gentry," asked Robert Quirke, "surely they take side with their lawful sovereign?"

"In the west, such is the case. The larger towns, and the villages around them have placed themselves under the orders of the gentry, and are arming in defence of the king. As I journeyed London-ward, however, after passing the towns of Newbury and Reading, and the royal residence of Windsor, I could experience a vast difference. Neither gentry nor soldiers were to be seen; but on every heath and common, and in every street and market-place, crowds were assembled around preachers, who were instilling into the ears of their hearers a poisonous belief that our king, yielding to the advice of Laud and the bishops, was about to suppress the reformed religion and re-establish popery in its stead. In proof, were adduced the

restoration of stone altars and painted windows in our churches, the use of credences and the surplice, or 'white' as they call it, in the pulpits, and an assumption of priestly authority on the part of the clergy, savouring of the days prior to the blessed reformation. As I entered the city—"

"Hast been to London then?" asked Master Jenkins. "Ay have I, and seen what I grieved to see. The whole city is armed and in opposition to the king."

"And where is the King?" asked every one.

"In the north—beyond Derby, or, as some say, at York—and, although the flower of our gentry and our nobles are rallying around him, it is said, that he is in sad deficiency of means to pay for the support of his troops."

"And the Queen—is she yet returned?" asked Robert Quirke.

"I am grieved to say, that a report is current, that the vessel, in which she was returning with ample supplies of money and ammunition from Holland, has been driven ashore somewhere on the coast, and she herself and all the moneys and

jewels she brought with her fallen into the hands of her enemies. The navy, it seems, hath sided with the parliament and against its king ; but the news of the queen's capture are so uncertain, that I would not have you depend upon them."

"I trust they be not true," said Robert Quirke, "and, upon that my trust, I will give you a toast to drink, Giles ; let the glasses be filled to their brims : now then, rise every one, and doff his cap—I give, ' Charles Stuart and his Queen Henrietta, and may their enemies perish as they deserve!'—to the dregs, boys, to the dregs, fancy the liquor the blood of the rebels, and leave not a drop of it, now—The King and the Queen—hurrah !"

Every glass was drained, and every voice exerted to such a degree, that the very cliffs, which impended over the Ship Aground, shook with the shouts which issued from its doors.

"Saw you aught of Master Pym, Giles Tudball ?" asked Master Jenkins.

"Ay, that did I," said Giles, laughing ; "I put on the guise of a Scotch pedlar, and made my way into his house, though I should have had a diffi-

culty in doing so, had I not furnished myself with the newest tracts, abusive of the bishops and the ritual of the Church."

"Saw you aught of Roger Priver and the preacher, Robert Browne?"

"I both saw them and talked with them; Roger is a great man, and, at the head of some half dozen pikes, escorts his master to the house of Parliament daily. The preacher, too, is established as chaplain to the household, and worrieth them, as they owned, with lengthened prayers and graces; none of which does he conclude, without entreating Heaven to visit upon Master Robert Snelling its heaviest malediction."

"Said they anything of the penalties likely to be imposed on certain parties, who imprisoned Master Pym and his followers, and sunk the carcasses of his horses in the Hone river?" asked Will Bowering.

"Ay, and indeed did they; they talked of the shutting up of certain Dunster men in the prison of Taunton, amongst whom the names of those here present were not forgotten," said Giles Tud-

ball. "But now, as I have given you all my news, it were but courteous in you to satisfy me as to what hath befallen this neighbourhood in my absence. What of the Dunster student—Hugh de Mohun? hath any one seen or heard aught of him?"

"I have seen but little, but heard much," said Robert Quirke. "He hath shut himself up in Dunster, and hath become, as it were, a mere milksop; and all, as they do report, for the love of Mistress Prudence Everard, whom, as you may remember, he saved from the waves, on the e'en of our mad doings at Culbone."

"Ay, and he hath, as it were, been mettymorphied," said Master Richard, the host, who had just returned with his wife. "He hath not quitted the walls of Dunster, or at least its park, but hath, as Basil Chipera told me, been sitting within, looking at the limning of his sweetheart, or wandering with her and the little Luttrells, amid the groves to hear the nightingale's song. It would seem that he were entirely changed, and, instead of the bold, sprightly youth we knew him, has be-

come a mere milksop. While Master Thomas Luttrell has been arming and training his tenantry, and his once friend and associate, Julian Bachell, hath been aiding his father in the same good cause, our wrestler and stick-player, who defeated Bully Alloway the butcher, and old Master Castles from Berkshire, hath become a mere hanger-on upon a fair girl and a dangler with children."

"Fie—fie, Master Richard," said Quirke, you know that, during the last few days, the life of Mistress Everard hath been despaired of, and that the young Hugh de Mohun hath been nigh distraught about the cause of her illness, which Basil Chipera, ere he left home with the parson, Master Snelling, attributed to certain unholy visitations from her whom we call the grey woman of Minyead."

"And whither hath the good Master Snelling gone, to require the esquirage of the cordwainer, and his parish-clerk, Basil Chipera?" said Giles.

"To Bristol, as it is said, to procure the printing of certain treatises in defence of him of Canterbury—Laud, who hath need of defenders, seeing

that he is close shut up in the Tower, and threatened to be tried for his life," said Master Quirke.

"To Bristol, said you? I hope not," said Giles.

"And why so, Master Tudball?"

"Because I was turned away from that quarter, ere I had passed the town of Chippenham, by a report that a plague was raging there, which was killing its hundreds daily," said Giles.

"Nine hundred thousand died there yesterday, only yesterday," said Will Bowering. "I heard it from good authority in the Channel, from a Bristol pilot, who would not approach nigher the city than the Posset Point."

"Where you expect to go to when you die, I know not, Will," said Master Quirke, laughing; "but if lying will ensure you a place among the tormented, you will not fail of it—you have killed more by some eight hundred thousand, in one day, than the fair city of Bristol holds within its walls."

"Well, well I meant nine thousand, nine thousand, and no less. Our old friend, Dr. Aaron Graveboys, hath saved a million by his medica-

ments ; an he were here, Mistress Prudence Everard would easily spare Master Hugh de Mohun to take his pastimes with us again," said Will.

"We have seen the last of him," said Master Richard Luckes, "call me liar else. Never will Hugh de Mohun enter these doors more, and make the roof of this room rattle again with his boisterous laughter. He is lost—become a mere milk-sop."

"I will not call thee liar, but I am here to refute your words, in one respect. I have entered your doors; but I cannot make the roof rattle with my laughter. I am here to seek tidings of Giles Tudball, to know if he hath seen or heard of my good tutor, Master Snelling, whose return was looked for to-day ; or of the mediciner, Doctor Graveboys, whose aid may even yet, be serviceable to the recovery of Mistress Everard."

"Hugh de Mohun!" cried the party, as they rose from their seats to greet him.

"Yes, Hugh de Mohun, but a changed, an altered being," said the youth, as he took the hands extended to him, and shook them heartily. "I

will, however, so far resume my former self as to partake of your cup, while my good friend, Giles here, of whose return I heard by chance, gives me the news he brings."

Giles, reluctantly mentioned the account he had heard of the severity with which the plague was raging at Bristol, and, as he told his ill news, he could not help remarking the great change that had taken place in the manner and bearing of the young man. Instead of the joyous, daring look, which he had used to wear, his face was smileless, his cheeks pale, and his eyes dull and dim. His dress too seemed to be neglected, and his hair, formerly the object of admiration to Mistress Richard Luckes, was altogether uncared for, and hung on his shoulders in disordered profusion.

His presence seemed to cast a damp over the joviality of the party; and, when he rose to leave them, to return to Dunster, every one felt his departure as a relief. Yet no one there present failed to regret that one so young and so gallant, so good and so generous, should be, thus early in life, weighed down by anxiety for the fate of those whom he esteemed and loved.

Hugh de Mohun walked rapidly towards the Castle, by the beach. He had resolved to travel to Bristol on the morrow, should no tidings be heard of his tutor that night, for he was sure that nothing but illness would detain him and prevent him from being at his post to discharge his duties in the church.

"I am not wont to desecrate the sabbath by travelling," said Hugh, "but it is of vital importance to me to see Master Snelling, and I trust, I may be forgiven, if I, for once in my life, break the commandment to keep the sabbath day holy."

"The sin needs not to be committed," said a deep voice in his ear. "I am here to tell you, that Master Robert Snelling is no more. He died two days since, of the plague, in Bristol. He blessed you ere he died, and seemed to wish to send you some special message; but his tongue failed him." In the speaker, Hugh recognised the mediciner.

Aaron Graveboys had come suddenly upon him, as he turned into the park of Dunster. A thick film seemed to pass over his eyes, his brain reeled,

as he thought of the destruction of all his hopes of learning the history of his birth and fortune. He fell to the ground, and would have fallen heavily, had not the mediciner caught him in his arms.

Jansen and his master conveyed him up the slopes to the Castle.

END OF VOL. I.



DUNSTER CASTLE,
AN
HISTORICAL
ROMANCE OF THE GREAT REBELLION.

BY
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IN THREE VOLUMES.

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DUNSTER CASTLE.

CHAPTER I.

A GREAT change had taken place within the Castle of Dunster since we last quitted it. Prudence Everard was recovering rapidly from the fever, which had once threatened her life. She was well enough to be allowed to leave her sleeping-room, and to resume her amusements of music and painting; although no one was permitted to visit her, save Mistress Luttrell and her nurse, for fear the disorder should even yet prove contagious. She would gladly have asked, why Hugh de Mohun was not with her; but delicacy forbade her doing so. No one mentioned his name in her presence, and, though she thought it strange, that no inquiries after her health were made in his

name, she did not feel justified in asking the reason of his silence.

And where was Hugh? Stretched on a bed of sickness.

The unexpected and unwelcome tidings of the death of his tutor and friend had so seriously affected him that, when Aaron Graveboys, with the help of his man Jansen, had conveyed him to the Castle, and into the apartment which, since the departure of Master Snelling for Bristol, he had used as his own, he had never quitted it, although some ten days had elapsed. His body was enfeebled and worn to a shadow, and his mind, like a compassless vessel, was driven hither and thither, by every wind of fevered fancy that blew upon it.

Master Luttrell was much grieved at the loss of his chaplain and friend, and still more grieved to think that two young hearts might be severed for ever by his untimely death. The secret of Hugh de Mohun's family and fortune, which he had carried to the grave with him, might never be revealed; and, as the guardian of the fair girl, he did not feel himself justified, in uniting her to one over whom a mystery was suspended.

The body of Master Snelling had been, according to the usual practice, buried immediately after his death; and the clothes and papers, which he had with him, burned. Orders had been given to Basil Chipera, who returned as soon as he had seen the body of his master interred, and took possession of his own apartments in the gate-tower, to put a seal upon the desks and drawers belonging to Master Snelling, in order that nothing might be displaced, until Hugh de Mohun was in a condition to inspect their contents.

The poor parish-clerk performed the duties imposed upon him; but the tears trickled from his eyes as he did it, for he had lost a good master and a kind friend. He felt lonely and deserted in his tower, and, instead of whistling and singing over his work, as was his wont, he brooded over his loss, and spent his time in wandering from his favourite lemon tree, on the south walls of the Castle, to the small door which opened on the staircase leading to Hugh de Mohun's apartment.

In the town of Dunster, and in Minehead, where the news of the young man's illness and its cause had been noised abroad, much sorrow was

manifested. Master Snelling had been much beloved by all, save the few adherents of the deposed preacher, Robert Browne; and Hugh was a general favourite. Many and eager, therefore, were the inquiries at the Castle daily, as to the probable chances of his recovery. Ten days elapsed, and the same answer was given by the servants to the questioners:—"He was still alive, and the crisis was not yet past."

On the evening of the tenth day, as Aaron Graveboys, who had been in constant attendance on the invalid, greatly to the scandal of the regular practitioner of Dunster, who felt unwilling to act with a mere quacksalver, was seated by his bed-side, he heard the door of the sick room gently opened. Thinking that the intruder was either Master Luttrell, or some one to whom admittance had before been yielded, the doctor did not rise from his seat, but continued to peruse his book, and to gaze at his patient from time to time. A light step approached the foot of the bed; the curtains were gently drawn aside; and, to Graveboys' great surprise, he saw Prudence Everard standing before him.

"My dream then is true—the voice, once heard at St. Leonard's Well, has not deceived me. Hugh, my friend and my preserver, is ill, nay dying, and no one, not even my more than mother, has been kind enough to acquaint me with the fact."

"She deemed it kinder, lady, to allow you, weak as you were and still are, to remain in ignorance of it," said Graveboys.

"It was a mistaken kindness, sir—nay more, it was a gross deception. I have accused him, who lies there, more closely resembling the dead than the living, of unkindness towards me in my prolonged recovery. I might have deemed that he had utterly deserted me, had not Heaven, in its mercy, miraculously revealed the truth to me. Tell me, and tell me truly, the cause of this illness, and whether, in the end, it is likely to prove fatal."

As Prudence rapidly uttered these words, she passed round to where Graveboys was sitting, and stood before him.

"Lady, dear lady," said the mediciner earnestly, "this is no place for you: return to your apartment, I entreat you."

"Not so, sir; I will not leave this room, until you

answer my questions and resolve my doubts positively and plainly. Fear not that I shall weakly sink under any tidings you may have to communicate: with me, doubt is more painful than even the dreaded certainty."

"The cause then of this illness, lady, is the death of one whom Hugh de Mohun loved well, the good Master Snelling, who died in the city of Bristol, of the plague, which is still raging there."

"Dead! say you? Master Snelling dead? why, an mine eyes deceived me not, I have seen Basil Chipera, his body-servant, alive and well within these two days—how could the one be taken, and the other left?"

"So Providence hath willed it: to its decrees we must bow submissive," said Graveboys.

"But the end, the consequences, of this fever? will they prove fatal? speak freely, I pray you," said Prudence, clasping her hands, and looking earnestly at the mediciner.

"A few hours will enable me to answer your questions, lady, and I pledge you my honour, if you will retire peaceably to your room now, I will in person convey to you the result of the crisis, of which I am hourly in expectation."

"Nay, I will sit here and watch with my own eyes," said Prudence.

"I entreat you not to do so, you can do no good, and, should the symptoms prove unfavourable, you may do hurt to yourself. Retire, and rely upon my bringing you the earliest tidings, be they bad or good. Allow me to lead you to your room," said Graveboys, as he rose and took the hand of Prudence Everard, who, after gazing steadily on the face of the invalid, suffered herself to be led out of the sick room.

"Poor young thing! poor young thing!" said Graveboys on his return, "she is weak still, and her mind wanders, or else some incautious waiting-maid has betrayed to her this illness, of which we wished her to remain ignorant. As to the supernatural warnings, I have lived too long and seen too much, to give credit to them—they are mere fancies—waking dreams—phantoms of the imagination."

"Not so, not so," said Hugh, in a weak, but distinct voice. "I have plainly heard the words of one, whom I believe to be among the dead, within this hour."

"Prudence Everard is alive and well, and was at your side not many minutes since," said Graveboys.

"I thank God for it," said Hugh, "but the voice at the Well and in the Keep, which pronounced me base-born, and advised me of the uncertainty of my kind tutor's return—how will you account to me for that?"

"We will wave the question now—you must sleep, for on a tranquil sleep depends much of the effect of my medicines."

Hugh turned on his side, and, after a few murmured sentences, fell into a deep slumber.

"I would that Jansen were returned from Taunton, with the drug for which I despatched him, for on its procuration will depend, I doubt not, the safety of my young friend here. He sleeps now, it is true, but it is the troubled sleep of disease. I would that Jansen were returned."

As Aaron Graveboys uttered these words, the door of the sick man's apartment was again opened.

"Hush! hush! whoever you be—hush," whispered the mediciner, as Hugh turned over on the

reverse side to that on which he had been lying.

"Hush, I prithee be gentle."

"Master Aaron, here is one whom former love for our patient hath induced to leave more busy scenes, to visit him in his sickness;—Julian Bachell is here: may he approach the couch of sickness?" said Master Luttrell.

"He may come in and view his friend, if he will but be silent. Even the slightest noise may prove fatal."

"And how is my friend?" said Julian, shuddering, as he gazed on the withered form before him.

"He is not worse, and those are the best news I can give. I have sent my follower, Jansen, to Taunton, for a medicament not procurable in these parts; and if it arrive before the crisis of the fever, I have great hopes that de Mohun may yet be saved."

"And without the drug, which you deem so valuable, the patient's life—"

"Is not worth many hours' purchase," said the doctor.

"Hath no one visited him this evening?" asked Master Luttrell.

“Yes indeed—but why I cannot tell; Mistress Everard hath been here, and was much perturbed by visions and voices, which, as she said, led her in a miraculous way to discover the illness which, in her weak state, we would fain have kept from her knowledge.”

“I would have seen my poor friend earlier, but that I have been busily engaged,” said Julian; “and I would pray you, in his sensible moments, to make my excuses to him for my seeming unkindness: but the same cause which hath hitherto kept me from his couch now compels me to quit it. I must leave Dunster, good Master Graveboys, and do you, Master Luttrell, hold me excused to your lady and your fair ward for not tarrying to pay them my respects. Good even, and may success attend the application of the expected drugs.”

As Julian Bachell spoke thus, he shook Master Luttrell and the mediciner by the hand, looked upon the fevered patient, and, after wiping away a tear which seemed to rise unbidden in his eye, slowly left the room.

“I am here—speak—appear—I am not afraid

to meet thee face to face," shouted Hugh, springing up in his bed.

"Gently—gently—lie down, my dear young friend," said Master Luttrell, laying his hands on Hugh's shoulders.

"Unhand me, sir; unhand me: I will not be restrained. I will seek the recesses of the Well, and the mines of the Keep, but I will find out the owner of that voice—What ho! coward, stay—you proclaim me basely born, you predict the death of my early friend and guardian, and then, coward-like, you fly from my approach. Ahah! I have thee now, I will hold thee tightly, until thou makest good thy words."

"Release me, Graveboys, release me, or he will choke me," said Master Luttrell, upon whose throat Hugh had clasped his hands in a most fearful gripe.

"Hugh, my dear Hugh, what means this violence? none but friends are present. Lie down I beg of you, said the doctor."

The invalid slowly unwound his fingers from the neck of his friend, and, looking up into the face of the mediciner, smiled and said, "It is you

then? I would not have believed but that I again heard that frightful voice, which has never sounded in my ears but to my disadvantage. Who hath been here besides you?"

"Your friend, Julian Bachell," said Master Luttrell.

"Julian Bachell? and why hath he absented himself for so long a period?"

"He hath been busily engaged in preparing troops to defend the cause of his oppressed king," said Master Luttrell.

"Yes, yes—I see, I understand. He hath a name and fair fame. Hundreds will flock to his standard, whilst I—but, only let your skill quell this fever raging within me, and I—even I, the unknown, ay the base-born—will make me a name. I will arm in the defence of my king, and, crying, 'An Everard to the front!' will—at—ah, ah, ah, I will—I will—ahah—ahah!"

"It is well," said Graveboys, "this last paroxysm has been so severe as to induce sleep. He will not awake again, for nature, overpowered, will induce a heavy slumber, which may prove favourable to the enfeebled senses. I would that Jansen were here."

"As our patient seems disposed to sleep, do you, Graveboys, allow me to take the post of watcher, while you seek that refreshment which you must needs require."

"I thank you, Master Luttrell. Our poor patient will give you no trouble, and I will take a little exercise on the terrace; for the fresh air from the Channel will do me much service. Should any necessity arise to summon me, I shall be within call."

Master Aaron Graveboys left the sick room, and sought the gate-tower. He begged of Basil Chipera, to go ask at the Luttrell Arms whether aught had been heard or seen of his man Jansen, and to bring him back speedy tidings of what he might hear.

Basil readily set about the execution of his mission, and the mediciner hied him to the terrace, to take his lonely but refreshing walk.

For some hour and a half, he paced the smooth turf, and wondered that he had not been summoned either by Master Luttrell to the sick room, or by Basil Chipera to meet his servant.

"According to my fair calculations, Jansen

should have returned some hour or two since: he was well mounted, on one of the troopers' nags, and is not wont to forget the use of spur and whip, nor to be a lag-behind. Unless he had to seek further for the drug than the shop to which I directed him, and which has never failed me before, he would be here ere now. I will to the gate-tower once more, and learn if Basil be returned."

Aaron Graveboys slowly descended the steep towards the gate, and saw, as he approached it, a crowd hovering, like a mist upon a lowland dell, over the body of a man that was placed on a plank. At his approach, the crowd divided, and allowed him access to the wounded person.

"How is this, Basil Chipera? Whom have we here? Has rebellion already burst forth, or hath there been some brutal broil in the town?" said the doctor.

"There have been foul doings not far from the town," said Giles Tudball; "for as I and my mate, Will Bowering here, were coming over the grounds near Conygar Hill, we heard the sound of blows, followed by deep groans, and, when we reached the spot whence they proceeded, we found your

faithful follower here, Master Jansen, lying on the ground, and well-nigh deprived of life. We bore him into the town, and, hard by the Priory, procured a plank, on which we were conveying him to the Castle, when Basil met us, in search of him, as it appears, by your especial orders."

"It is so, worthy Master Graveboys," said Basil, "I met them here hard by, and, as far as my powers of examination go, I doubt not but that some serious injury has been inflicted on poor Master Jansen."

"Bear him into your gate lodge," said Graveboys, "and convey him safely and gently to your couch, where I will examine his wounds, and do you, Giles and Will Bowering, dismiss the crowd, and assure them of my gratitude."

Whilst Giles and Will disposed of the curious crowd, the mediciner followed Basil into his chamber, whither he had conveyed the almost lifeless, but still breathing body of poor Jansen.

"Loose the band about his neck," said his master, "and unbutton his vest. Now apply a plentiful jet of cold water to his brows, by means of yonder ewer, and then stand aside, and let the

fresh wind from yonder casement blow upon him; stand aside, stand aside."

The bearers stood aside, and a convulsive motion of his body showed that the patient was yet alive.

"Open his palms," said Graveboys, "open the palms of his hands, and rub them freely."

"It is of no use," said Basil Chipera, "for he keepeth his palms as tightly compressed as the vice of a blacksmith."

"Let me apply this stimulant to his nostrils," said Graveboys, "and I warrant me his muscles will relax, or he will recover his full senses."

The doctor applied the stimulant for some time without effect. At length, Jansen sneezed violently several times. His hands relaxed as he did so, and a paper fell from one of them to the ground.

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant," said Graveboys, as he picked up the paper, and raised his hat from his head, quoting, without a notion of any irreverance, a scriptural passage. 'Well done! though you have been engaged in a mortal struggle with some enemy, you have not forgotten to fulfil your master's bidding. The

reward will be that this same drug, which will bring relief to the sick youth, will also give relief to the wounded. A little water, Basil, a little water in a cup, and, if the Taunton chemist have not adulterated his drugs, Jansen will soon be well, and our young friend at the Castle speedily placed without the reach of danger."

A cup of water was speedily procured. A few grains of the drug were mixed with it, and, with the assistance of the by-standers, a few drops were poured into the mouth of Jansen.

The effect was almost miraculous. The wounded man awoke, as if from a dream, and gazed about him. A second dose, which he took himself, brought him to his full senses, and enabled him to obey his master's orders to lie quietly, until he should have an opportunity of returning to him.

Graveboys dismissed the crowd, who still loitered about the gate-tower, with many thanks for their kindness to his servant, and, having left Basil Chi-pera in care of him, sought Hugh de Mohun's apartment, with the valuable drug in his hand.

CHAPTER II.

"HODGE, what ho!—Hodge, I say !—open me the gate speedily."

"Ay, ay, sir, I will but fetch the key," said Hodge.

"Tardy fool! here have I been screaming until I am well-nigh hoarse to gain an entrance to my home, and then you coolly tell me, you will go fetch the key."

"I heard you not, good Master Julian, I heard you not, or I would have—"

"Enough, you grow old and as deaf as an aged hound. Where is my groom, Alick Pearson?" said Julian Bachell.

"I know not. I have not seen him since he quitted with you this afternoon," said the gate-keeper.

"Has he not returned?"

"I cannot tell. I have been napping awhile, but I will ask of one who will be sure to know. Janet!—Janet, wench! come forth of your room, and tell Master Julian here, if Alick Pearson hath returned to Ashley-Combe Lodge."

Janet made her appearance, and told her young master that Alick was gone up to the Lodge with a stranger, who had arrived on horseback, some quarter of an hour before.

"Trip on before me, Janet, and summon Alick to take my horse. I would speak to him alone, before I enter the Lodge. See that you contrive to let him alone be aware of my arrival," said Julian, as he followed the winding road, that led up to the stables of the Lodge.

In a few minutes Alick joined his young master.

"Assist me to dismount," said Julian, "for I have hurt my shoulder. This accursed beast stumbled over a broken fragment of rock, and threw me."

Alick received his master in his arms, and set him on the ground. Then, like a good groom as he was, he set about examining the knees of the

.

horse, to see if he had received any injury. It was too dark to allow his eyes to satisfy him, but, having passed his hand carefully over both the fore-legs, he gladly pronounced him to be safe and sound.

"Stable him," said Julian, "and see that you tell no one of my fall. I am not seriously hurt; but, were I to intimate that I have had a fall, my good father would not rest quiet, until I had been examined by the surgeon."

"Master Bachell is at present too busy with weighty matters, or I am mistaken, to inquire after his son's fall from a horse," said Alick.

"What mean you?" said Julian.

"A messenger, armed, and well-nigh as much jaded as the good horse he rode, hath arrived within this half hour, and is now closeted with your father. I believe he brings tidings of Master John Pym," said Alick. "They are together in the library, where, as you may see, lights have been ordered."

Julian walked towards a side entrance, which led to the library; and Alick, having secured the horse within a stall, procured a light that he might

see to unsaddle him and place him in comfort for the night. When he returned with the lantern, he carefully examined the horse from head to foot, but could find no marks of the fall which had injured his master's shoulder.

"He must merely have tripped and thrown Master Julian unawares, good horseman though he be," said Alick, "for, had he fallen on his knees, he would not have risen again without leaving upon them the mark of the jagged red-stone. He hath been ridden smartly too, and no wonder; for, doubtless, his rider did not fail to vent his passion in whip and spur, when he had remounted him."

While Alick was thus speaking to himself, and preparing to remove the foam and dirt which almost obscured the bright skin of the horse, Julian, reached the library door. Without giving any intimation of his entrance by tapping on the door, he raised the latch and entered.

His father was seated at the table in the centre of the room. At one end of it stood a tall man, in a trooper's dress, who, on seeing Julian, bowed stiffly to him.

"Mauworth," said Julian, "what makes you a visitor here at so late an hour?"

"To convey a message to your father, sir," said the trooper.

"From your captain, as he calls himself—Master John Pym, I presume."

"Not so, those papers were confided to me, by one who rode speedily, as upon a matter of life and death, with a request that I would instantly place them in the hands of the owner of Ashley-Combe. He would have delivered them himself, had he not been in haste to supply his master with a drug, on which, as he said, the life of the young Hugh de Mohun depended, and for which he had ridden to Taunton."

"Mean you one of the servants of Dunster Castle, who had been sent by Master Luttrell for the drug in question?"

"I mean Jansen, the man who follows the mediciner, Dr. Graveboys, who neglects his other patients to watch beside the student of Dunster. Folks do say that de Mohun is more wounded in heart and mind than in his body; first by the illness of Mistress Everard, and then by the sudden death of his tutor and friend, Master Snelling."

"Julian," said Master Bachell, "I am glad you are returned: I would speak with you on matters of serious import. Master Mauworth, I am more indebted to you than I can express, for having complied with Jansen's request to place these papers in my hands."

Mauworth bowed, and said that he was glad to have had it in his power to oblige one, whom he and his master so greatly respected.

A smile passed over the father's face, as he looked at his son, but so slight as not to be observed by Mauworth.

"You will remain here to-night, to rest yourself and your steed, and ride over the hills in the morning," said Master Bachell.

"Not so, sir, though I thank you for the offer: I made bold to ask Master Pearson to furnish food for my horse; and, with your leave, I will take something myself, and return to Cutcombe as speedily as I may; for Mistress Pym, in the absence of her husband, hath no one, with whom she may consult but myself."

The necessary orders were given; Mauworth left the library with the servant, and, in about

half an hour, was heard riding down the hard road, on his way from Ashley-Combe.

"Thanks, good Master Mauworth, thanks," said Master Bachell, bursting into a laugh as soon as the trooper had quitted the library. "Little do you think, that, in complying with Jansen's request to place these papers in my hands, you have done your master a deep injury."

"Indeed," said Julian, "what then are their contents?"

"Read, Julian; read for yourself."

Julian, forgetting the injury he had received, in his eagerness to seize the papers, stretched out his right hand for them. The pain of the attempt caused him to groan.

"It is nothing, sir, a mere nothing," said he, in reply to his father's inquiries. "My horse stumbled with me, and I fell. My shoulder is slightly bruised, that is all."

"A slight bruise would not produce so deep a proof of pain—I will despatch some one for medical aid," said the father.

"I need it not, I do assure you, sir," said Julian. "I will but examine these papers and retire to bed,

and fear not to rise in the morning free from all bad effects from my tumble."

"Well, what think you?" said Master Bachell, when he saw that his son had read through the documents before him: "Hath not Mauworth rendered us good service?"

"I must away to Dunster Castle, late though it be: Master Luttrell must be informed immediately that Pym hath procured warrants from the Parliament to seize his person and that of Hugh de Mohun, as well as yourself and your unworthy son. I wonder how Jansen obtained possession of these warrants, and these other papers, which instruct Mauworth to prepare for king Pym's arrival, backed by a force suited to compel our obedience to them, aided by the bands he hath trained about Cutcombe. I will to Dunster instantly."

"Nay, Julian, not to-night—the morning will serve your purpose as well; for, as you may see, by looking at the dates, Master Pym will not reach here yet these three days at the earliest."

"I cannot rest until I have apprized Master Luttrell of his danger, sir, I can, moreover, sleep

at the Castle, and avail myself of the services of the mediciner, Aaron Graveboys, who is in attendance on Hugh de Mohun. I would know too, the effect of certain drugs, which were to be administered this night, and on which the fate of the young de Mohun, as the doctor asserted, greatly depends."

Master Bachell, seeing that Julian was bent on going to Dunster, and somewhat comforted by his promise to avail himself of the mediciner's skill, offered no further opposition to the scheme. He carefully collected the letters and papers which Mauworth had brought with him, and threw them into the fire, where he held them until they were entirely consumed.

Julian, by Pearson's aid, was mounted on a fresh horse, and, in spite of the pain from his shoulder, set off at a rapid pace for Dunster Castle, whither we must precede him.

"Well, Jansen, how fare you now?" asked Aaron Graveboys in a kindly tone.

"Better, master mine; greatly relieved by the wondrous drug, but still more, as I think, by the copious blood-letting; but I am sorely bruised,

methinks, and shall be as stiff to-morrow morn as yon bed-post there."

"What ailed thee, man, to delay so long in the city of Taunton as to let night gain upon thee, when thieves stalk abroad? It hath gained thee a beating, and well-nigh lost thee thy life. How was it?"

"Thieves, indeed! no, no, master; had the man who attacked me so suddenly in my rear, and brought me to the ground by a well directed blow of a heavy cudgel, been a thief, he would not have left me some golden jacobuses and other coins, which I have safe about me. Who he could be, and what could be his motive for attacking me, I cannot opine. My eyes danced lightning, after the blow upon my scull; and yet, methinks, I struggled with my foe, and brought him to the ground with me, or else it was my horse which I was leading by the bridle under Conygar Hill. I am all in a mist even now," said Jansen.

"But what delayed thee at Taunton?" again asked Graveboys.

"Give me a drink of water, and I will tell you that will amuse you, as I think," said Jansen.

Graveboys poured a few drops from a phial into a tumbler of water, and gave it to his man. Jansen drank it greedily, and seemed greatly revived by it.

"No sooner had I seen my horse properly stabled and fed, and procured the drug for which you sent me, than I hastened to secure such refreshment for myself, as should enable me to return here with all speed. The host of the Talbot had just set before me a goodly quarter of lamb and a jack of sound ale, when I observed two men ride into the yard; I knew them at once to be Master Roger Priver, the former high bailif of Dunster, and Master Robert Browne, the deposed preacher. Not wishing to be seen by them, for reasons which I need not mention, I begged of mine host that he would put them into a private room, until I should have finished my repast and taken my departure."

"Wisely done, Jansen, wisely done," said Graveboys.

"Well, would you think it? Providentially, as it appears to me, mine host of the Talbot places the late bailiff and the preacher in a side room,

into which a small window gave me an opportunity of looking, myself being unseen. I could hear too, every word that was said. You may suppose, master mine, that my eyes were not permitted to slumber, or my ears to be idle. I heard and saw enough to convince me that my trouble in watching and listening would be amply repaid."

"And what was the subject matter of their discourse?" asked the mediciner.

"It was of such a nature, as induced me to leave my meal all unfinished, and to search sundry leathern bags, which were attached by thongs to the saddle of Master Roger Priver," said Jansen.

"And your trouble was not in vain, I trust," said Graveboys.

"Assuredly not, for, within the lining of one of the leathern bags, I found a parcel curiously folded, and directed to Master Mauworth. I opened it, and found that it contained warrants and authorities from the Speaker and the Parliament, for the arrest of Master Bachell and his son Julian, and Master Luttrell and Hugh de Mohun, now lying on the bed of sickness. Ha! ha! ha!"

"But why laugh you, Jansen? this is a serious matter," said his master.

“Nay, I cannot but laugh, to think of the trick I played them, and not only them, but Master Mauworth also,” said Jansen. “I put some hay and other things found in the stable, into the wrapper of the parcel, and restored it to the saddle-bag; and, taking the documents and letters to your friend the drug-seller, got him to enclose them and endorse them to Master Bachell of Ashley-Combe; for I would not bring them with me to harass good Master Luttrell here, who is sufficiently worried by the illness of his ward and the young de Mohun:—and whom think you I selected for their safe conveyancer? ha! ha!”

“Nay, I cannot think,” said Graveboys.

“Even Master Mauworth himself; he swallowed my bait, like a gudgeon as he is, though I own, it was sheer good-nature that prompted him to accede to my wishes—and, having listened to my report of the ill state of the young Hugh, he took the packet meant for his own private perusal to the malignant Bachell: ha! ha!”

“It was well done, Jansen, admirably done,” said Graveboys. “But do you not think that the sound drubbing you received might have been the

result of the discovery of your trick upon the worthy Master Priver and the preacher?"

"So sure am I that they are still at Taunton, and as yet ignorant of the loss of their valuable packet, that I would pledge my life upon the certainty of riding back thither, and finding them expounding to the canting thieves of their own way of thinking the latest calumnies invented by his enemies against our sovereign, King Charles."

"It were well that Master Luttrell were informed of the contents of the packet," said Graveboys. "If my experience deceive me not, Hugh de Mohun, who is in a deep sleep, will awake free from fever, and Mistress Everard hath already ceased to be an object of anxiety to her friends. Do you therefore, Jansen, compose yourself, allow the stimulant, which I but lately exhibited, to have the narcotic effect I intended it should have, and fear not but to-morrow will find thee hale again—though a little sore, perchance, from the rough treatment thou hast experienced."

"I will obey you, master mine, seeing that I can scarcely keep my eyes from closing—but I would beg of you not to implicate me in the mat-

ter of—of—of—aheugh—heugh—heugh—” said Jansen, as he dropped into a deep sleep, and fell to snoring, in a way which we can scarcely describe in print.

Aaron Graveboys threw the clothes about his servant, and smoothed his pillow for him. He then mixed a little more of the contents of his phial in a tumbler of water, and placed it within the patient’s reach, in case he should awake in the night, and need it. He then lit a night-lamp that was placed in a recess of the chamber, and left Jansen to a repose, which, he had but little doubt, would last until the morning was far advanced.

He next sought the chamber of Hugh de Mohun. At its door he was met by Master Luttrell and Julian Bachell: the latter inquired earnestly how it fared with his friend.

“Wait until I have taken another glance of him,” said the mediciner, as he entered the sick chamber.

Master Luttrell and Julian did not wait long in suspense. The doctor returned to say, that the drug was doing its duty bravely. The skin was moist, the pulse subdued, and, by the blessing of

God, the dawn would see the patient beyond the reach of danger.

Master Luttrell took the mediciner's hands in his, and shook them heartily. Julian attempted to follow his example, but groaned heavily, as the pain in his shoulder reminded him of his accident.

"What ails you, sir?" said Graveboys.

Julian repeated to him the account he had given to Alick Pearson and his father.

"Strip, young sir," said Graveboys, "a fall from a horse, where no limbs are broken, is not a serious matter for a young man; but a little blood-letting, and an outward application of a cooling nature, may save him much pain."

Julian resisted for some time, but Master Luttrell seconded the efforts of Graveboys so effectually, that he at length consented to have his arm examined.

"This is not the result of a fall from a horse," said Graveboys, as he handled the limb rather roughly; "the tendons are strained, as in a struggle; you must have seized hold of a tree, or something, in your fall, that has done the mischief."

Julian could not say how the injury had been

caused. He had been hurt, but could not tell in what manner, unless that he had lost his seat on horseback, in consequence of the horse tripping."

Graveboys bled him plentifully from the injured arm, gave him a dose from the phial which had proved so soporific in its effect on Jansen, and recommended him to seek his bed immediately.

Julian obeyed, and when he had retired, Dr. Aaron Graveboys explained to Master Luttrell the nature of the news he had received from Jansen, touching the intended proceedings of Master Pym.

The news, however, had been already communicated by Julian Bachell; and, as the mediciner had to keep watch beside his patient, he bade Master Luttrell a good night.

CHAPTER III.

WHEN day dawned, Hugh de Mohun was free from fever, but as weak, and almost as helpless, as an infant. Julian was allowed to visit him for a few minutes, before he set out for Ashley-Combe, accompanied by Master Luttrell, who was anxious to consult with his neighbour as to what plans it were best for them to adopt, to be prepared for Master Pym's expected visit.

The result of their consultation will be seen hereafter.

In the afternoon of the same day, Dr. Graveboys, having left his patient in a sound slumber, which, as he could reckon, would last for some two or three hours, and, having apprised Mistress Luttrell of his intention of accompanying his servant,

Jansen, well in health, but wondrous sore from his bruises, to the Luttrell Arms within the town, set out for that purpose.

At the gate of the hostelry, he was met by Giles Tudball, Will Bowering, old Master Robert Quirke, and the captain of the St. David, who had just arrived from Minehead. They, all of them, made an anxious desire to ascertain the state of Hugh de Mohun's health an excuse for meeting to pass a jovial evening at the Dunster hostelry.

"What cheer? ho!" shouted Master Jenkins, is the wind favourable for the student's arrival in the port of safety?"

"It bloweth steadily from the right quarter at present," said Graveboys, "and, by the help of Him that cōtrollēth the elements, I trust, to use your own sea-talk, a few days will see Hugh de Mohun safely at anchor in the bay of recovery. I speak only as to his bodily ailments; for his mental sufferings for the sudden loss of his friend, he must seek a better physician."

"Whom he will find, I doubt not," said Robert Quirke, "in kind Mistress Luttrell and her fair ward, who, as report says, looks with a favourable

eye on him, who saved her from a watery tomb in the Hone river."

"But why stand here, my friends?" said the host of the Luttrell Arms, "when well stuffed chairs, nicely-rushed floors, and tables covered with flagons of good ale and sound cider, await you within?"

"Well put in—though the advice be somewhat interestedly given," said Giles Tudball. "Let us avail ourselves of the hint."

"In, in, man," said Will Bowering, slapping Jansen heavily and heartily on the back.

"I will thank you Master Will, to reserve the weight of your heavy fist for the first merman you may wish to knock on the head. My bones are somewhat sore, I do assure you," said Jansen.

"Hast tried to poison some man's wife, and been chastised by the husband for failing in the attempt?" asked Will.

"In, man, in, if your wish to learn the cause of my not returning your friendly but rude salute with interest," said Jansen.

The ale-eup and the cider-can passed merrily round. The toast was given, "A speedy recovery

to Hugh de Mohun!" and heartily responded to, even by Alloway, the wrestling butcher, who had entered the room, unobserved by the company.

"Jansen," said Graveboys, "one more sip at the cider-can, and you must, as Master Jenkins would say, rest on your oars, until your fever hath left you entirely, and your limbs are sound again."

"What aileth Jansen, then?" asked Robert Quirke.

"Ay, what ails him?" said Will, "I did but lay my hand on his shoulder e'en now, as lightly as the puff of a summer's breeze, and he yields me to it as easily as an over-canvassed boat would yield to a squall."

"Let him tell his own story," said the mediciner; "we can smoke our pipes and listen to him. The very notion of a whiff or two, hath a charm for me, who have been for some length of time imbibing no other perfume but that of drugs, and broths, and such other slops as are administered in a sick chamber."

"Tobacco, master mine, is a narcotic—a sedative; and, though I am forbidden to resort to the ale-can and cider-mug, I see not why I should

be debarred the enjoyment of a pipe," said Jansen.

"Well, thou canst smoke and talk too," said Will. "Folk say it is impossible to do two things at once, and both well, but I have seen Master Robert Quirke there, smoke his pipe, steer his boat, cut up cabbages for dinner, and keep an eye on the dog-vane, and all at the same time, without any apparent trouble."

"I have seen and heard thee drink and tell marvellous lies at the same time," said Giles Tudball; "but coil up the cable of your talk, Will, and let us hear what Master Jansen has to tell us."

Will was silent, and Jansen told the company of the trick he had played upon Roger Priver and Mauworth, and of the cruel and cowardly attack that had been made upon himself by some one, as he passed under Conygar hill.

"Wast kissing some fair country wench in the sight of her sweetheart?" said Will.

"Mother Earth was the only female that I saluted, and wondrous hard did I find her lips," replied Jansen.

"I would wager my month's pay," said Will,

turning suddenly pale, "that thou hast been attacked by Mother Leckey, the grey woman of Minyeard, for thou hast ever sneered at her powers, and even doubted of the o'er true tales that are recorded concerning her."

"If it were Mistress Leckey who attacked me, she hath a marvellous strong arm for an old woman, as my bones can testify," said Jansen; "but I have no misgivings about the return of those who are once entombed, as we all of us know old Mistress Leckey was."

"Let us drop that subject," said Master Robert Quirke, seriously; "and do you, host, tell us, if your quick eye can detect them, who those two persons in horseman's clothes are. They are riding down the hill hither, doubtless, with the intention of becoming your customers, although their wearied steeds do not seem to have spirit enough left within them, to trot up to your stable-door."

"An my eyes, and they are used to keep a sharp look-out," said Master Jenkins, "an my eyes deceive me not, yonder tall horseman with scull-cap on his head, and huge pistols at his saddle-pommel, is none other than Master Roger Priver. He

who followeth in his rear, besmothered in his long cloak, and nearly extinguished by his high-peaked and broad-brimmed felt, is his constant attendant Master Robert Browne."

"They would never venture to show themselves here, unbacked by a suitable force," said Giles Tudball. "They cannot so soon have forgotten the mines at the foot of Dunkery Hill."

As the pair approached, however, with faces as solemn as if they were going to a funeral, no doubt remained on the minds of the revellers that the sour faces belonged to the individuals whom Master Jenkins had named.

"Ask them in hither," said Dr. Graveboys to the host, as Priver and the preacher passed under his gateway towards the stables. "Invite them into this apartment, but tell them not by whom it is occupied."

"Good," said Robert Quirke, "we may learn with what intent they are here, and at any rate, give notice of their presence to those, whom it most concerns to know it."

"I will contrive to fulfil your wishes," said the host, "under pledge that no insult be passed upon

them in my house. Get them out into the street, and then murder them, an you like it."

"Tush! tush, man!" said Will, "we are not likely boys to rob the hangman of his dues. Go, fetch them in."

The host was absent for a few minutes, which were spent by Graveboys and his friends, in concerting a plan for sending the news of Priver's arrival to Ashley-Combe, where they knew that Master Luttrell was. Before they had fully agreed upon the best means of accomplishing their object, the door was opened, and the host, bowing meekly, ushered in, and announced by name, the bailiff and the preacher.

Both Roger Priver and Master Browne started back, when, through the volumes of tobacco smoke that filled the apartment, they saw the features of half a dozen men, who, they had no reason to doubt, had anything but a friendly feeling towards them. The former, threw back his cloak, and laid his hand on his long rapier, or tuck, as it was called: the latter also followed the motions of his leader, so far as throwing back his cloak went, but, instead of laying his hand on a carnal weapon,

he drew forth from his vest the well-remembered, silver-clasped book, whence he had striven to hold forth on his unseasonable visit to Culbone revels.

"Welcome, Master Priver—welcome," said Graveboys, "and you too, preacher, be seated I entreat of you."

"Ay, be seated, and partake of our good cheer," said Quirke. "Room there! make room, you Alloway, for the bailiff of Dunster, between yourself and Master Bowering. As for Master Browne, when he hath removed his huge cloak, which seems to me to have been made for a much bigger man, we will find space and place for him between myself and Master Jenkins."

Priver retreated, and would have left the room, but Giles Tudball had contrived so to shift his high-backed chair, that it was impossible for any one to open the door without thrusting him aside.

"Smite him," said the preacher, "even as Samson smote the Philistines."

"I would pray you, Giles Tudball, not to let me. I would leave this room, and be in privacy with my friend," said Priver.

"Tush, man," replied Giles, "never quit good company or good drink. Sit thee down, and partake; what art afraid of? Think you we owe you a grudge for disturbing our pastimes at Culbone? Tush man! the old sore is healed by this time."

"Let me pass," said Priver.

"Nay, master bailiff," said Robert Quirke, "thou knowest that I took no share in certain matters which bred an ill-feeling for a while. Sit down, and I will pledge you my word that no harm is intended you."

The preacher was about to commence a speech which might have led to a breach of the peace, but, before he had ended his first sentence, his companion placed his hand over his mouth, and bade him be silent. "Master Quirke," he added, "hath his word pledged for our safety; so we will e'en take the seats, and partake of the cheer that is offered to us."

A huge silver tankard was handed to them, of which both drank plentifully, for the sun was high in the heavens, and the sky cloudless: the ale, moreover, was good.

"Well pulled, Priver, well pulled Master Browne!" said Alloway. "To it again man, to it again!"

"If one might judge by appearances, you have travelled far this morning," said Graveboys.

"But from Wivelscombe," said Roger Priver, "yet the day is somewhat hot, and our cloaks were rather burthensome."

"And we did diverge to visit Cutcombe," said the preacher.

His companion gave him a look, as if the information had better have been concealed.

"Is Master John—King—Pym, as they call him, returned to his home and his family?" inquired Quirke.

"Nay, he tarrieth in the great city. He is about his master's work, and regardeth not home nor family, until that be done," said the preacher—"how long? how long?"

"Silence, good Master Browne, and let us not disturb the harmony which existeth, by allusions to matters, that none here can comprehend," said Priver.

"Bravely said! let us drink to Master Bailiff,"

said Giles Tudball, "under his new character of peace-maker."

The tankards passed merrily round, and neither the preacher nor Roger Priver declined them, when they were placed in their hands.

"And what news heard you at Cutcombe? asked Graveboys, "how fares Mistress Pym and her family?"

"Well, all well," said Priver.

"And Master Mauworth, how fareth he?" inquired Robert Quirke; "how doth the training and exercising of his bands suit him?"

"I saw him not; I am here to seek him. He hath been absent the past night, and Mistress Pym is anxious about him," said Priver.

"Ay, and we have papers of importance from Master Pym, to deliver into his hands," said the preacher. "The day of retribution is at hand."

"Silence, I entreat of you again," said Priver.

"Ay, silence, and pass the flagon," said Master Jenkins, "why thou hast drunk deeply, Master Preacher, for it is emptied. I will summon the landlord, and have it replenished; for the day is, as you say, somewhat hot, and engendereth thirst."

Jenkins left the room, and shortly afterwards returned. He had given a hint to the host to draw of his strongest, and to mix a small portion of spirit in each tankard. After some half-dozen had been emptied, of which the travellers took more than their respective shares, Giles Tudball, who observed that an unwonted quantity of strong drink upon empty stomachs had produced its usual effects, proposed to the company to drink to the health of King Charles.

The proposal was received with a shout by all but the preacher; for Master Roger was in so happy a humour, that he forgot for the moment, that he was about to join in an act of rebellion to the party whom he served.

"It would choke me, were I to attempt it," said Master Browne. "Good Master Priver, thou art oblivious."

"Nay, I am thirsty," said Priver.

"Peace, Master Preacher, peace, do you drink to him who is still our lawful sovereign, and, an you will it, we will toast Master Pym, your King Pym, as a neighbour and a man of gentle blood," said Robert Quirke.

"To our king," said Roger Priver, laying a stress on the word *our*, and winking at Browne, who did not choose to follow the example set him, but threw his eyes up to the ceiling, and uttered his favourite cry, "how long? how long?"

"Nay, an you drink not on that hint, said Giles Tudball, your thirst must indeed be quenched."

"I will drink no more, said Browne; "and it were well for Master Roger Priver, whose eyes glisten, and whose frame is unsteady already, to follow my example."

"Example is better than precept, as you often have expounded to us," said Priver, "and a goodly one hast thou set me now. Thine eyes do not glisten, it is true; but they have a strange obliquity of vision, and I doubt not but that the one flagon before thee appears as if it were two."

"Wouldst intimate that I have exceeded the bounds of sobriety?" said Browne, starting to his feet, and fairly staggering so as to be obliged to lean on the table for support.

"I do not intimate," said Priver, rising to face the preacher and staggering too, "I do not intimate, but do assert and affirm, that thou art drunk."

"Drunk in thy throat, thou reviler," said the preacher. "But I will not fail to report to Pym and the Parliament the base conduct of him whom they have selected for their agent, as a fit and proper person to see to the serving of their warrants, and the seizing of the persons of certain malignant prelatists and papists."

"And I will not be backward in painting, in its true colours, the character of the godly preacher, who knoweth not how to use the ale-pot in moderation. The faithful lean on a broken reed—on an Egypt—" said Priver, and to prove the truth of his words, the circular table yielded to the weight of the preacher, and he would have fallen to the ground, had not Quirke and Jenkins caught him, and reseated him in a chair. Roger Priver smiled, and ironically drank a deep draught to the restoration of his friend.

"Warrants said you?" asked Aaron Graveboys, "warrants from the Parliament?"

"Ay, warrants from Master Speaker, to seize and bring before him certain malignants," said Browne, "for ill-treating and shutting us up in a foul mine and otherwise misconducting—"

"He saith true," interrupted Priver, in a solemn drunken tone. "I have even now in my horse-bags, in yonder stable, warrants, empowering me to seize the bodies of the malignants, the Bachelles, father and son, and him of the Castle there, with the mumming student, Hugh de Mohun."

"Ay, and that promoter of papacy and prelacy, Master Robert Snelling," said the preacher.

"Hugh de Mohun lies on a bed of sickness, brought on by the sudden news of the death of good Master Snelling, in Bristol," said Graveboys.

"How say you?—dead? is mine enemy dead?" said Browne.

"The parson of Dunster is dead, and of the plague; but he was no one's enemy," replied the mediciner.

The preacher threw himself back in his chair, closed his eyes, raised his hands, as if in the act of prayer, and remained quite silent.

"I war not with the sick and the dead," said Priver, "but I must execute mine office."

"I would wager thee the cost of this our entertainment," said Jansen, "poor as I am, that the Parliament would never trust such as thou art,

with warrants to seize on such as are the Bachells and Master Luttrell."

"I will accept thy wager, although it is an ungodly habit, and I will prove thee a loser, if any one will bring me from yon stable the bags that are on the back of the stout roan horse," said Priver.

"I will fetch them for thee," said Alloway, "seeing thou art not in a condition to fetch them for thyself."

"He lieth, I am as sober as—"

"Your companion there, who is fallen into a deep sleep at the news he hath just heard," said Giles.

Roger Priver was about to perform sundry feats, to shew that the ale had not hurt him, when Alloway returned, bringing the bags.

"Open me the further one, and give me that packet sealed and tied with tape, and directed to Master Mauworth," said Priver.

Alloway passed the packet to him. He was too tipsy to see that the seals had been tampered with, but cut the strings, and tore it open. To the ground fell a lot of straw, hay, and stable-muck, and, shortly afterwards, the person of Master Pri-

ver, completely deprived of his senses by surprise and the quantity of strong liquors that he had swallowed upon an empty stomach.

A hasty consultation was held, and, in less than two hours, the senseless bodies of the preacher and his companion were both of them on board the St. David, and on their way to Cardiff.

Graveboys and Jansen, after seeing them on board, and taking leave of their friends, returned to Dunster Castle.

CHAPTER IV.

Two days had elapsed since the events recorded in the last chapter. Hugh de Mohun lay stretched on a couch, in an antechamber adjoining his sleeping-room. He was lying and gazing out of the open window on the park and the distant view of the Channel, which formed its boundary in that direction. As far as his bodily feelings were concerned, he enjoyed that delicious sensation which always attends the removal of fever. His mental feelings, although subdued by his bodily ailments, were still painful in the extreme, for, until he had searched the papers, in the tower occupied by his late tutor and friend, Robert Snelling, for some undoubted proof of his legitimacy, he could not but hear the fatal words of the

speaker at St. Leonard's fountain still ringing in his ears, and pronouncing him base-born.

He endeavoured to relieve his mind of these painful thoughts by reading, but, when he arrived at the close of a page, he found that the words and sentences had left no impression on his senses: he persevered in the attempt, but the result was the same.

He then threw aside the book, and sought relief in sleep. It would not visit him, or, if it did, it was but for a second, and it was accompanied by the hated words spoken at St. Leonard's Well.

He next sought amusement in watching the deer, as they browsed about in companies in the park below him, and in listening to the songs of the birds, with which the woods, lining the sides of the Castle's slopes, were filled. Each change served to divert him for a time, but the painful thought, that he had lost his best friend, and the only person who could solve the mystery of his origin, would recur.

"Would that I were dead—that I had died with the parent who begot me!" said Hugh.

"Hugh de Mohun," said a solemn, but sweet voice, "grief hath divested you of reason, or the pupil of good Master Snelling, would never have disgraced his master by uttering words of such wicked import."

"Pardon me, madam," said Hugh, as, turning on his couch, he saw Mistress Luttrell standing by his side; "what between grief and sickness, I am well nigh distraught. I know not what I say."

"Heaven pardon thee, Hugh! your troubles have been great, your sickness severe."

"How can I thank you, dearest lady, for the care thou hast bestowed on me, in my sad indisposition!" said Hugh, seizing the hand that she had placed in his, and raising it to his lips.

"By being silent on the subject. We owed thee a deep debt for a deed thou wottest of, and there is one without, who would fain, having obtained the mediciner's leave for that purpose, be permitted to assure herself of her preserver's safety."

"You mean the fair Prudence—Mistress Everard I ought to call her. Pardon me, lady, if I refuse to see her, until I have ascertained, from papers which I hope to find in the repositories of

my deceased friend, whether I may meet her as—as—”

“Hope nothing from that quarter, my son, that is, my young friend,” said Aaron Graveboys.

“And why not, sir mediciner?” asked Hugh.

“Because I have already examined every paper, and searched every recess, for the information you hope to obtain,” said Graveboys.

“And by what authority have you ventured to ransack the depositories of my friend and guardian?” said Hugh de Mohun, raising himself on his elbow, and gazing at Graveboys, with eyes that seemed to dart forth bright sparks of anger and indignation.

“I was authorized by him who is now no more to do so; as a living witness, Basil Chipera, can testify. Had I not been so authorised, however, as your physician, and knowing that your malady resulted more from mental than corporeal causes, I should have ventured to do as I have done, with the permission of Master Luttrell, in order that, by removing the cause, I might have cured the disease.”

“I cannot but approve of your motives for so

doing," said Mistress Luttrell, "and Master Hugh de Mohun will not fail to acknowledge the propriety of your proceedings, when he shall have come calmly to reflect on those motives."

Aaron Graveboys bowed.

"And found you nought to console me?" said Hugh.

"I found nothing, my young friend, relating to the secret of your birth. I found, however, papers written in a foreign tongue, which may eventually give you a clue wherewith to thread the labyrinth of your difficulties. These I have carefully preserved, and will deposit in your hands, ere I quit you," said the mediciner.

"But why should you quit me yet, until I am perfectly restored to health?" said the young man anxiously.

"I am summoned hence on matters of moment, by those whose summons I must not disregard; moreover, I believe that my attendance upon you is no further needed. A few simple directions to Basil Chipera will enable him to restore you to the world again," said Graveboys.

"And de Mohun must not forget that much

time, which might have been more profitably spent elsewhere, hath been devoted to him alone," said Mistress Luttrell.

"How can I—poor, and destitute of means as I am, how can I ever repay you, sir, for your attention and your medicaments?" inquired Hugh.

"As far as pecuniary recompense goes, I am already paid," said the doctor. "Master Luttrell hath more than satisfied me for my time and my trouble. But, if Hugh de Mohun seeks to show a feeling of gratitude for my services, he may do it, and at no great cost."

"Explain yourself, and if it be feasible, doubt not my willingness," said Hugh.

"It is merely that he will see and converse with Mistress Prudence Everard, whose perfect recovery depends on an assurance of her preserver's safety: and that he will not allow a false pride to urge him to refuse such offers, as will be made him by Master Luttrell, for his future means of support," said Graveboys.

"To the first proposal I cannot but yield, to the second, I can offer no refusal, until I know their nature," said Hugh.

"Your promise need not be conditional," said Mistress Luttrell, "you ought to know my husband better than to deem it possible that he would suggest for your adoption any plan inconsistent with your honour and future fame."

"I promise unconditionally, and crave your pardon, lady, for my hesitation."

"It is well," said Graveboys, "the career marked out for you is honourable, and may, if properly pursued, lead to greatness. But I would urge you, in this presence, Hugh de Mohun, not to allow a boyish affection, even for so fair and worthy an object as Mistress Everard is, to induce you to exchange vows with her, which should bind you both for life. You are both young, and events may occur, in the busy scenes that await us, which may render the fulfilment of those vows doubtful, if not impossible."

"There is much truth in what you say," said Mistress Luttrell, "and I will use my influence with both, to keep the vows unmade, or to unmake them, if they have been already spoken. These are times, wherein men will have to seek the battlefield more frequently than a lady's bower."

Hugh sighed deeply, and turned aside his face from the gaze of the mediciner, which was firmly fixed upon it.

"My young friend will not act dishonourably, or I am greatly deceived in him," said Graveboys. "I must leave you, de Mohun; but we shall meet again before very many weeks have passed. It may be, that I shall be compelled to assume a different dress from that which I now wear, and to act in a different character; but, should your eyes and your ears fail to discover me, a glance at this will suffice you to know your friend."

As he uttered these words, Dr. Aaron Graveboys drew from his vest a small silver cross, set with diamonds, and, when Hugh had examined it for a moment, so as to be able to know it again, it was restored to its place.

"May God preserve you and protect you in the race which you have to run!" said Graveboys, as he pressed the hand of the young man, and he said it in so solemn a tone, and in so impressive a manner, that both Mistress Luttrell and de Mohun involuntarily, as it were, uttered a sincere Amen. With a lowly salutation to the lady, the mediciner

left the room. Hugh gazed after him, and, when the door had closed upon him, seemed to ask from Mistress Luttrell a solution of some sudden doubt that had come over him.

The lady, however, did not notice his inquiring looks, but, approaching a door opposite to the one by which Graveboys had left the apartment, opened it, and in a low voice summoned Prudence Everard into the presence of her preserver.

Hugh raised himself on his couch, as if he would have left it to meet his fair visitant. Prudence saw the attempt, and fully comprehended its meaning.

"Bid him not rise, madam," she said to Mrs. Luttrell, "I know, by my own feelings after my illness, that any, the least, exertion is too great; Hugh de Mohun cannot conceive for a moment, that any ceremony need be adopted towards me, who am here but to ascertain the truth of Dr. Graveboys' assertion, that his recovery is as certain as mine own."

"Mistress Everard, I thank thee. It is consolatory to me, to know that any one should feel an interest in me, who am, as it were, a mere no-

body, a man without name and fame, and a dependent on the charity of others, perhaps for the very bread I eat," said Hugh, as he sighed deeply, and turned his face towards the casement, to hide the bitter tears that, in spite of his exertions to repress them, flowed down his cheeks.

Prudence Everard could not but see that he wept, and the sight of tears on the face of a man is one of the most painful of sights to a feeling woman. She seized his emaciated hand, as it hung listlessly over the pillow of his couch, and, drawing Mistress Luttrell towards him, with a meaning that could not be mistaken, in earnest tones begged of him not to yield to despondency, but to rely upon One, who would doubtless make the chastisement inflicted upon him profitable to him, both here and hereafter.

Hugh, for a moment hid his face in his pillow and wept bitterly. The thought that the hand which had clasped his might have been his own, had not Master Snelling been so suddenly and so awfully carried off, was too much for him to bear. He imagined that the trial to which he had been subjected was greater than had ever been imposed or

man, and his heart was the abode of hopelessness and despair. The thought that "the morrow shall be even as to-day," is comfortable to the happy and the prosperous: while the same thought, to the afflicted and the miserable, proves the extreme of wretchedness.

Prudence could refrain no longer. The sight of her preserver, her lover, her loved one—for she could not conceal from herself that he had won her affections—convulsed with grief and giving way to the floods of tears, which seemed to have their source and spring within his heart, was too much for her. She sunk on her knees beside his couch, buried her face in her hands, and, after a few heavy sobbings, fell heavily on the floor.

"Behold what you have done!" said Mistress Luttrell. "Hugh de Mohun, this is cruel and unmanly."

"May God pardon me, lady!—but, if she be dead, it is by no fault of mine that I have caused her death. Had my own life depended on the subduing of my feelings, that life had been forfeited," said Hugh, again trying to rise.

"Be still, I command thee, Hugh;" said Mis-

tress Luttrell, as she raised Prudence from the ground, and placed her on the couch at the young man's feet. "Employ the minutes that may pass until my ward recovers from this faintness, in summoning to your aid such courage, as may suffice to prevent a repetition of this painful scene. I take blame to myself, for having, at the mediciner's express request, permitted this unfortunate meeting."

"Say not so, lady—say not so, I intreat you: do you but use the means to recover Prudence from her swoon, and trust me, that no betrayal of the misery I am suffering shall again distress her," said Hugh.

Mistress Luttrell applied such remedies as were at hand, and, in watching their result, Hugh forgot his own griefs. When Prudence was fully restored to herself, he was calm and collected, and, in earnest tones, apologised to her for having displayed such a want of fortitude and resignation to his painful lot, as to have caused her to feel so deeply for his weakness.

"You must not allude to it again, Hugh—" said Mistress Luttrell, "neither must I permit

this interview to be prolonged. You are both of you still too much weakened by illness to restrain your feelings, and too much excited to know correctly in what position you stand towards each other; as your common friend, let me speak for both. You, Prudence, shall own a feeling more than friendly towards your preserver, but shall do no more: no vows shall be given or received at present. You, de Mohun, to whom a noble career will shortly be opened, which will cause your absence for awhile, have already told to Prudence the love you bear her—”

“I was then in the belief that I was nobly born, and—”

“Silence, I pray you; do not interrupt me, Hugh. Preserve that love pure and unsullied. Let it be the bright star of your destiny, and, in all your struggles for fame and a name among men, let its light guide your steps and gladden your heart. Trust one, who knows her sex well, and believe me, when I say that a short absence, employed in the pursuit of all that is great and honourable, will not obliterate the ob-

ject of its affections from the heart of one that truly loves."

Hugh de Mohun looked at Prudence, to see what effect these words would have upon her. He saw her raise her eyes to his, with a look that he could not be deceived in. The pure blood rushed to her cheeks and forehead, and, stretching out her hand, she placed it in his, and at the same time rested her head on the bosom of her guardian.

"I will despair no more," said Hugh, "I swear, either to claim this hand when I may do so with honour, or never to return to this spot again; leaving you free to accept the vows of one more worthy but not more devoted than myself."

"Enough, and more than enough; you have transgressed the bounds I had set, in my own mind, to the terms on which you were to part," said Mistress Luttrell, gazing sorrowfully and yet kindly on the youthful pair.

"We part not yet I trust," said Hugh, holding the hand of Prudence in a firmer grasp, as if to detain her.

"It is better that we should do so now, at once,

but not for ever," said Prudence, gently withdrawing her hand, but leaving in her lover's a ring which she always wore, and on which she set a high value, from its having belonged to her mother.

"Then, for a time, farewell! may—may Heaven—but I will say no more: it would only unman me. Prudence Everard, farewell!" said Hugh, and resolutely turned from her.

"Farewell, Hugh de Mohun, and rely on my prayers being offered up to Him whose providence is over us, for your happiness and success in life," said Prudence, as Mistress Luttrell led her from the apartment.

Hugh hurriedly concealed the ring that had been given him, and then lay down to ponder in his mind on the interview that had, so unexpectedly to him, taken place. The result of his meditations was a placid, calm assurance that he was beloved by Prudence Everard, and that she would be his own, when fate should put it in his power to claim her. So cheering was the thought, that a weight of misery seemed lifted from his heart, and hope, which had been a stranger to him for

some days, held out a beacon, which seemed to light him forward in the path to fame and happiness.

He had scarcely closed the examination into his state of mind, when Mistress Luttrell again entered the room, leading with her the little Alice and William.

"We cannot quit the Castle it seems, without another leave-taking," she said, as the children bounded forth towards their favourite; "but gently, Alice, you forget that an invalid cannot bear so much noise; William, dear, you must not cling to Hugh's neck, and hug him so roughly."

"Nay, madam, they hurt me not," said Hugh, kissing them. "And so you are going to leave Dunster?"

"Oh yes, and I am so sorry; but it is only for a little while, and I am to take Sylvia with me," said Alice.

"And I am to ride on Trotty all the way, and by myself too," said the boy.

"And Prudence Everard is sorry too: she cries at the very thought of quitting Dunster, but then she has not a Sylvia of her own, and has never

ridden since we all went together to St. Leonard's Well," said Alice.

"I hate that place," said William.

"Why do you hate it?" asked Hugh.

"Because ever since we went there last, you and Prudence have never been well, and we have all been so dull."

"And whither do you journey now?" asked Hugh.

"We are going, with mamma and Prudence, and some of the maids, to stay at Colonel Wyndham's, for papa says, the Castle is wanted for something or other, in which the women will only be in the way," said William.

Mistress Luttrell smiled, but it was a melancholy smile, as she removed the children, and told Hugh, that information had reached her husband, that it was probable the Castle might be attacked by some of the Puritans, who had already taken up arms, and were besieging and taking possession of the strongest castles and fortresses, in the name of the Parliament. He had thought it better, therefore, that the troops, which he had been engaged in training for some time past, should be in-

roduced within the walls, and the Castle put in a state to resist the anticipated attack. Their old friend Colonel Wyndham, who was to join his forces with the tenants of Dunster, had requested her and the females of the family to take up their abode, until the result of the information should be seen, in a quiet, but secure retreat that he had near the town of Bridgewater.

Hugh kissed the lips of the children and the hand of their mother, and was again left to his own thoughts.

CHAPTER V.

WHEN Prudence Everard had left Hugh de Mohun, she retired to her apartment to prepare herself for her journey. The state of the roads, and the hilly nature of the country, rendered it, if not necessary, certainly far more agreeable to travel on horseback than on wheels.

When she had completed her preparations, which took less time than they would have done, had not her maid urged her to be speedy, she sought the library, where she expected to meet the party assembled. No one, however, was there. She threw herself into a seat, and took up a book to while away the time; but, though her eyes saw the words distinctly enough, they conveyed no meaning to her mind. She was too full of the late

interview with Hugh de Mohun to turn her thoughts to any thing else.

"If I intrude, pray pardon me," said a voice, which made Prudence almost start from her chair, it came upon her so suddenly, and so unexpectedly.

"When can Julian Bachell intrude and need pardon?" said Prudence.

"When he rudely disturbs the studies of a young lady," said Julian, bowing low.

"Nay, I was not studying, I was merely amusing myself by reading the pages of the poet, Shakespeare," said Prudence, about to close the book.

"Which have proved very interesting, seeing that you have been reading them upside down!" said Julian, fixing a peculiar look on the blushing girl.

"I merely took up the book to occupy a few minutes, until Mistress Luttrell and her children should summon me to set out with them on our journey," said Prudence, "I had scarce got the book to my hands, when your voice aroused me—"

"From some interesting thoughts, if I may

judge by their intensity, which blunted your ears so effectually as to prevent your hearing my approach," said Julian; "but you are travelling towards Luxborough, I am informed; may I venture, in the absence of another, to offer my poor services as an escort?"

"I thank you, Julian Bachell, but we are sufficiently well provided, seeing that Colonel Sir John Wyndham and a party of his tenantry, will guard us and see us safely lodged in his house, which as you know, was once the residence of my family, and still bears our name, being called Luxborough-Everard," said Prudence.

"Danger lurks in every bush, it is said, and one more arm, though probably deemed an inefficient one, may not prove needless," said Bachell.

"I have full confidence in the skill and means of Colonel Wyndham, sir, and I would suggest that you might perform a more efficient duty in paying a visit to your sick friend, who is deserted by his leech and his nurse, Mistress Luttrell, than in adding one to an escort, doubtless sufficiently strong and numerous to guard some half a score females."

"I would have done so ere now," said Julian, "but that I heard of certain visits and leave-takings, which, they say, have been of so trying a nature as to have stayed the recovery of Hugh de Mohun, in no slight degree."

"I know not on what authority you speak," said Prudence, looking the young man calmly in the face; "but, when I parted with him, I thought him much improved in healthfulness of appearance, and I am not aware that any one hath intruded on him since, but the children, of whom he is overfond."

Julian bit his lip, and his eye fell beneath the fair girl's calm gaze.

"Should fate or accident bring me near to Luxborough, may I venture to ask for admittance into the presence of Mistress Everard?" asked Julian, in a tone of ironical deference.

"With the permission of the Colonel and her kind guardian—Prudence Everard is not the person to refuse admittance to one, with whom, in her childhood, she has lived on terms of close intimacy,—but here are the children, to announce that every thing is ready for our departure."

Julian again bit his lip, as he offered her his arm to lead her from the library : it was declined, as also was his proffer to place her on her horse. She mounted without assistance, but, when she had taken her seat, she held out her hand, which Julian could not refuse to accept. As he did it, the colour left his cheeks deadly pale, and his lip curled as in derision—it might have been a stronger feeling—hatred. He saluted the rest of the company graciously, and watched them for some moments, as they rode through the park, towards the hill over which their road lay.

“ Why so melancholy ? ” said Master Luttrell, coming suddenly upon him.

“ It is enough to make one sad, sir, to think that the times are so out of joint, as to render it a matter of necessity that the ladies of this strong Castle should be forced to flee from its walls, and seek shelter elsewhere,” said Julian.

“ Say not necessity, but prudence—”

Julian started, for he thought Master Luttrell was about to speak of Mistress Everard.

“ A matter of prudence, Julian ; a few days I trust will free us from all apprehensions, and

enable us, to dismiss the dulness which must brood upon our walls, until the bright eyes of the ladies, and the cheerful voices of the children, gleam and be heard within them again. But we must mount and away, lest your father deem us but slothful soldiers. I have ordered Jefferies to prepare us a slight repast in the library, where, when I have arranged a few matters of importance, I will join you."

Master Luttrell left Julian Bachell at the small postern door which led to the library, and, by a staircase concealed within the buttress, to the room at present occupied by Hugh de Mohun. Before he had closed the door behind him, he was arrested by the voice of Basil Chipera, who begged him to give him admittance.

"Whither go you, or whom do you seek?" said Julian; "Master Luttrell is not within."

"I know it, sir, I met him e'en now as he turned the corner of the wall. My business is not with him, but with Master Hugh above, here. He hath left the cold and cheerless student's room, in my gate-tower, for the more comfortable apartments to which this staircase leads," said Basil.

"And what would you with the sick man?" asked Julian.

"I would deposit in his hands, certain papers and writings," said Basil.

"I shall visit him, and will deliver them into his hands for you, Chipera; it were better that he were not too greatly disturbed, until he is more convalescent," said Julian, extending his hand for the papers.

"I thank thee, sir; but I had my instructions to give them to him myself from one whom, after the services he has rendered him, I must needs deem it right to obey."

"The mediciner, mean you?" inquired Hugh. Basil Chipera bowed.

"Prescriptions, doubtless, in case the disorder should return during his absence."

"Not so, sir; these are papers which Doctor Graveboys hath selected, after much and anxious research, from amongst the writings and documents of my late and lamented master, Robert Snelling," said Chipera.

"I will not stay or detain thee, then, for I doubt not, Hugh de Mohun will be glad of so wel-

come a parcel. It may throw light upon what is now sufficiently obscure—his birth and fortunes.”

“I fear not, sir; for I heard the good doctor say that they were written in a foreign tongue, and we know that Master Hugh is of English parentage,” said Basil.

“How know you that?” asked Julian sharply.

“Because, he speaks our language as none but a native can speak it,” said Basil.

“Enough, good Chipera,” said Julian, smiling, “deliver your papers to Hugh de Mohun, and tell him that I gladly hear of his convalescence, and would visit him, did not matters of great importance summon me hence.”

“I thought sir, you said, but now, that you were on your way to visit him, and would take charge of these papers,” said Basil.

“True; but the same reason as I before assigned for that proposal will apply now: he hath need of quiet, and one visit will suffice,” said Julian, as he turned the key of the inner door, which admitted him into the library.

Basil Chipera mounted the narrow staircase, and, having deposited the papers with Hugh de Mohun,

returned to take his station at the gate, which was now become a post of importance: as the portal was closed, and not opened to any one, unless with due leave granted by the master of the Castle, or, in his absence, by the lieutenant.

He had not resumed his post many minutes, before Master Luttrell rode out from the quadrangle, followed by Julian Bachell. They started at a rapid pace, down the declivity which leads from the Castle to the town, and, after traversing the main street, and passing the market-house, turned up the hill to the left, through a narrow lane, which would afford them the shortest and readiest means of reaching Ashley-Combe.

We must precede them, and enter a field about four acres in extent, situated below the gate-lodge of Ashley-Combe, and above the little town of Porlock-wear.

Master Bachell, with some half score gentlemen of the immediate neighbourhood, whose names it would be superfluous to mention, as they will not fill a prominent part in this history, had taken his station in this meadow, and was awaiting the arrival of Master Luttrell, to select from a body of

well-trained tenantry, drawn up before him, four-score of the best men, to form the garrison of Dunster Castle, who, with certain of the townsmen and immediate neighbours, were deemed a sufficient regular force, which could be increased at an hour's notice.

As soon as Julian and Master Luttrell arrived, the selection was made, and the garrison troop, under the command of colonel Wyndham's faithful follower—an old campaigner, who had fought with him under Gustavus Adolphus, and who bore the name of Hamnet Hele—was marched off to take up its quarters in Dunster Castle. The remainder were dismissed to their respective homes, with orders to hold themselves in readiness, and be prepared to join their fellows on the shortest notice of the approach of the enemy. The gentlemen were invited to ride up to Ashley-Combe, and take refreshment, before they returned to their homes.

The dinner was speedily despatched, and, when the claret was set upon the table, and the servants had quitted the hall, the conversation naturally turned upon the news of the day; which from the

remoteness of the spot where they were assembled, and the slow mode of travelling at that period, allowed of wide scope for conjecture, as the truth or falsehood of the reports that reached them, depended for credit or discredit, chiefly on the character of the persons by whom they were conveyed.

"I cannot believe, even now," said Master Bachell, "that John Pym will dare to march an army against his neighbours and friends; although I have seen, and can testify, that he hath a design to seize the persons of Master Luttrell and others, with whom I have the honour to be associated. His intention, I doubt not, was to make us give such promises, or legal sureties, not to take up arms or otherwise interfere in favour of the king, as should enable him to report as neutral those whom he knows to be loyally affected."

Several of the gentlemen coincided in these views, but Master Luttrell said, that "the news he had received, came from a source of whose correctness he could not entertain a doubt."

"Is the name of your informant to be concealed?" inquired Julian.

"Not in the present company. I cannot hesi-

tate to declare, to the true friends of our King, assembled here, that I had my news from Dr. Aaron Graveboys," said Master Luttrell.

"It doth surprise me, that one so prudent, and so much versed in worldly knowledge as you, sir, should place so sure a reliance and belief on the report of a mere quack-salver, who travels about the country for his own support and maintenance, with a box filled with pills and unguents, and who, like the pharisees of old, hath a trumpet blown before him, to proclaim his virtues to the world."

"The very fact of his travelling the country, and being consulted by persons of every shade of opinion, Julian, naturally affords him access to the means of gaining much news," said one of the party.

"But here hath he been shut up in Dunster Castle, I know not how long, ministering to the ailments of the young Hugh de Mohun," said Julian, "whence can he have procured his news, on which, to my surprise, Master Luttrell placeth so much dependence?"

"Read that, young man," said Master Luttrell, as he placed a small piece of parchment in

Julian's hand. It may remove your doubts, of the mediciner's means of giving me tidings on which I may rely."

Julian opened the packet which was directed to "Dr. Graveboys, now sojourning in the Castle of Dunster, these and with all speed," and read thus.

"I give thee to know, that Sir John Hotham hath closed the gates of Hull, and refused admission to his King. The Earl of Essex hath been entrusted by the Parliament with the command of the forces which have been enlisted (with a false pretence), for service in Ireland. It concerns those among whom you are sojourning to know, that Master John Pym is set out for Somerset with a force to seize upon all the strongholds, under pretext of punishing certain persons for some trifling offences committed long since. See you look to inform them thereof.

Your friend,

JOHN DIGBY.

Julian read the letter twice. "And who is this John Digby, who is in correspondence with a quack-salver?"

"It is Sir John Digby, the sheriff, of whose exertions we have all heard," said Master Luttrell. "There was a postscriptum to the letter, but I was not permitted to know its import, which was of such a nature as to induce Master Graveboys to quit Dunster on the instant and travel eastward."

"If John Pym of Cutcombe come armed, and with the warrant of Parliament, to seize our neighbours and friends, it will be a favourable opportunity, in resisting him and the authority he brings with him, of shewing to our lord and King that in the west he hath a strong party, in whose loyalty he may confide," observed one of the gentlemen.

"Let Master Pym come an he will," said Master Bachell. "He hath been rash enough to send his warrants beforehand, doubtless with a view to assure his adherents of his favour with the Parliament; but he will have a difficulty in recovering them, seeing that they vanished with the wood-ashes up the flue of yon fire-place."

"And how came they in your possession?" inquired some one.

Master Bachell recounted the history of Jansen's trick upon Roger Priver, Master Browne,

and Mauworth, and excited a hearty laugh among his guests, by the merry way in which he recounted it.

"Nobly done on Jansen's part, and we will reward him for it—let us e'en drink to him in a goblet of good claret," said a gentleman on whom the wine had made a little impression.

"With all my heart," said Master Bachell. "Fill gentlemen, and drink to Master Jansen, who may have saved us from a sojourn within the walls of Taunton prison."

The whole party rose to their feet to do honour to the toast, and, as Julian raised the goblet to his lips, and was about to drink, he caught sight of the figure of Janet, the daughter of Hodge, the gate-keeper. She beckoned to him to follow her, as she retired through the hall door. He drank off his wine, and left the table 'unobserved, during the shouts that followed the draining of the glasses.

"What now, Janet, what brings you here? It can be no slight matter that could so far conquer your modesty as to bring you unbidden into the hall, where none but males are assembled. You are not wont to be an eaves-dropper either," said Julian.

"I have seen that, sir, within these five minutes, that hath well-nigh driven all sense out of my head, letting alone my sense of modesty. But that I should have caused too sudden an alarm and thereby done some mischief, I would have proclaimed openly in the hall, that the Lodge is surrounded by armed men, and my father a prisoner in his gate-lodge," said Janet.

"And how did you escape, Janet?" inquired Julian.

"I was not within the gate-lodge," said Janet demurely. "I was above in the copse, with Alick Pearson; we are betrothed now, so that there is no harm in my keeping his company."

"And where is Alick now? send him to me immediately," said Julian. "I have need of his services to summon our friends around us."

"That is cared for already, sir; for I did but wait to see if the troop who came from Culbone, were our friends and meant to turn in hitherward, before I despatched Alick to go through the woods to the Wear, and to the town of Porlock, and to cause them to spread the news in all directions," said Janet.

"You have done well ; now, Janet, seek the servants, and bid them arm themselves, but order them, from me, not to act until I give them further notice."

"Gentlemen," said Julian, again entering the hall, "the time is come to prove our courage and our loyalty."

"What mean you?" said Master Bachell, as he and all his friends rose and laid their hands on their rapiers.

"The Lodge is surrounded by a body of armed men, and the keeper of the outer gate is now in their custody," said Julian. He briefly told them the news which Janet had brought to him, and the steps which he had taken in consequence.

"It is well done, my son ; let Master Pym, for I doubt not this is his device, approach, and even enter these halls. We will hold him in parley until our friends arrive, and he finds himself entrapped. I will dower Janet nobly for her bravery and forethought."

Before Master Bachell had ended speaking, the trampling of horses' hoofs on the rocky road was heard, and, in few minutes, Pym was seen, with

about three score well armed troopers, riding up to the Lodge.

"Halt," cried Pym; "I myself will demand admission."

"Nay," said Master Bachell, "you shall not need to do so; I myself will go out and invite you in; though you be an unwelcome guest. Follow me, my friends—or, upon second thought, it were better that you remain and receive our guest here. It may argue a want of confidence, or a suspicion of wrong, if I appear before him surrounded by a party of gentlemen in arms."

So saying, and bidding his guests be seated, Master Bachell left the hall, followed only by his son.

CHAPTER VI.

"WHETHER Master Pym cometh here as a friend or a foe, I know not; though, judging from the number of well-armed followers, wherewith he visiteth my poor house of Ashley-Combe, I may be excused from having my suspicions—he is welcome as a neighbour," said Master Bachell, addressing Pym.

Pym raised his hat and bowed.

"Would it please you to alight, and partake of such refreshment as my house affords?"

"Such in part is my intention, for we have ridden far and fast," said Pym.

"It is done in a truly neighbourly way, to call as you pass, and bring some few score of followers with you, to test the contents of our larder

and our cellar. I hope there be viands enough to supply all with what they may need; at all events, they shall be welcome to what they can find," said Master Bachell, with a smile, which was not responded to by any one of the company, all of whom wore a morose look on their faces, and sat like statues on their horses.

"Master Bachell, when I said that it was my intention to alight, and to take somewhat to refresh me, I meant not to imply that your hospitality was to be taxed for that purpose. We have wherewith to refresh ourselves, as our sumpter-horses will speedily arrive. You will consider yourself my prisoner, and on your parole—if so it please you: if not, I am here in sufficient force to take and maintain possession. Choose you which you please, imprisonment in your own house, or partial freedom upon such terms as I shall dictate," said Pym.

"I pray you come within, where we may talk this matter over," said Master Bachell. "I will not, however, take you by surprise, but inform you that I have some friends within my hall, to the number of half a score. Do you therefore select from your band so many as shall equal them

in number, and be deemed by you a sufficient escort."

"I will do so," said Pym, as he bade half a score men dismount and accompany him within. The rest remained on horseback, drawn up in front of the mansion.

"I will shew you the way," said Master Bachell.

"I need not your showing, sir," said Pym, "I am no stranger to this locality."

"I crave your pardon—I ought to have remembered, that John Pym and myself, once met as friends; and that, since he hath turned out a disloyal person, he hath once visited this our house, and partaken of its poor refreshments."

"It is well remembered, Master Bachell. The occasion of our last visit, as I shall shortly explain, has led to this our present meeting. Open me those doors," said Pym, pointing with his sheathed rapier to the doors that led into the hall.

"They are already open—enter, sir, I entreat you," said Bachell, bowing lowly, in mockery, as he flung the door aside.

"I am glad to see that two more are in our presence, whom it much concerneth me to meet,"

said Pym. "If our eyes deceive us not, yonder stand your son, Julian, and Master Luttrell of Dunster."

"*King* Pym with a vengeance! he useth the our most majestically," whispered Julian to Master Luttrell.

"Silence, and let us see whither all this tends," replied Master Luttrell.

"Would it please you and your followers, to partake of our humble fare? it is sound Bordeaux, and will not add to the sourness of those gentlemen's looks," said Bachell, with mock deference.

"I have said before that we have provisions of our own," answered Pym. "But now to business. We arrest you, Master Thomas Luttrell,—you, Master Bachell, and your son Julian, together with another, whom we see not here at present, in the name of the Parliament, for unlawful deeds done at Culbone revels. As we said but now, before we entered this house, we will give you freedom on your parole, if you will pledge your honour to abide by it."

"Master Pym," said the elder Bachell, "I told you before, on the occasion to which you have alluded, that neither Master Luttrell nor I had any-

thing whatever to do with those revels; and what I said then, I now repeat, that, if you can produce any warrant, bearing the King's signature, for my apprehension, I will submit myself your prisoner without a murmur."

"And I," said Master Luttrell.

"And I, too," said the younger Bachell, "but not till then."

"Gentlemen," said Pym, "listen to me."

"Speak, then, as to your equals: do not king it over us with your *wes* and *ours*, and we will listen," said Julian.

"Gentlemen, listen to me," continued Pym, not heeding the interruption. "I am here with such a force, and so well disposed, that you are at my mercy. It is not my intention to do you any wrong. I am here to take prisoners the parties to whom I have already alluded, and promise them, in the name of the Parliament, an impartial hearing, without any personal restraint, if they submit."

"And what if we do not?" inquired Bachell.

"Then it will be my painful duty to resort to measures I would willingly not adopt," said Pym. "Though you dwell so far from the busy world,

you cannot but know, gentlemen, that Charles Stuart's support of Episcopacy in this land, and his attempt to impose a ritual and certain form of worship upon the land of his fathers, have already brought him into such contempt, that he retains but the name of a King, and that all real power is vested in the Parliament, who, for the good of the nation, have taken the government into their hands."

"We know," said Julian, "that a set of canting knaves have—"

"Silence, Julian; let us hear all that Master Pym hath to advance before we reply to him," said his father.

"Armed with the authority of that Parliament, of which, as you know, I am an humble member, as the representative of Tavistock, I am here, as I said before, to claim my prisoners."

"Can you produce your warrants—supposing that we should feel inclined to yield ourselves to the usurped powers of a disloyal house of commons?" said Master Bachell.

"Thou knowest that they have been destroyed," said Pym.

"By whom?" asked Master Luttrell.

"Would that I knew!" said Pym.

"Have they been duly served or how?" said the elder Bachell.

"Master Bachell, Master Bachell," said Pym, "this is worse than trifling. The consequences will be heavy: where are Roger Priver and Master Browne? where hast thou them concealed?"

"I pledge you mine honour as a gentleman, that I have seen neither of them since the day on which, with Master Luttrell, I released them from the mines in Dunkery Hill. Nor have I heard aught of them, saving that you had taken them under your especial protection, and sent them on some errand to the town of Taunton," said Bachell.

"Nor have I," said Julian, "though I would gladly have met with them, and repaid them for their insolent behaviour, when you last visited this house."

"To you, then, Master Thomas Luttrell, I must apply for their safe restoration—for I have information of their having left my house at Cutcombe for the town of Dunster," said Pym.

"I will pledge you my word, as a gentleman,

that I know no more of them, than you yourself do," said Master Luttrell.

"Pym looked at each steadily, for some moments; but neither quailed beneath his gaze.

"You will not deny, Master Bachell, that you have seen my lieutenant, Mauworth, within these few days?" continued he.

"Assuredly not. He was here as a messenger, some three or four days since," said Bachell. "I gave him what refreshments he stood in need of for himself and his beast, and he, returned, as I presume, and as he informed me he should do, to perform his duties as the guardian, in your absence, of Mistress Pym and your children."

"And the packet which he brought? I would demand of you the nature of its contents, and what hath become of it," said Pym.

"I do not hold myself accountable to Master Pym for any messages or parcels that may be sent to me, even though their delivery be entrusted, to the hands of one of his own followers," said Bachell.

"'Tis well. You have doubtless destroyed the warrants, which, by some means, at present not

known, were abstracted, as I believe, from Priver's saddle-bags, and, as a drug-seller in Taunton will testify, were re-directed to yourself through the agency of one Jansen, and delivered to you by Mauworth, though he was ignorant of what he bore to you. Know you where Mauworth may now be found?"

"I do not," said Bachell, "as I have already told you."

"Then I will inform you, Master Bachell; my faithful follower, is lying a murdered corpse at the mouth of Dunkery mines."

A deep groan burst from the soldiers, and Pym passed his hand across his eyes, as if to remove a tear. The party around Master Bachell looked at one another, as if to ask the meaning of the news.

"How say you? honest Mauworth murdered? are you assured of the truth of what you assert?" inquired Master Bachell.

"I saw his body with mine own eyes," said Pym. "I had not known of his fate, perhaps, until the crows had devoured him, had not a shepherd found his mutilated corpse by a mere chance."

"Who can have done so foul a deed" said the

elder Bachell. "I give you my word, that I will use my best exertions to discover the murderer and bring him to punishment. I will also give orders that his remains be conveyed home for decent interment."

"That is already cared for," said Pym, "but I thank you none the less for your friendly offer, and readily acquit you of all share in and knowledge of the horrid crime."

"You could do no less, on the assurance of my father's ignorance of it from his own lips," said Julian.

"I am not here, young man, to receive instruction in my duties from or to bandy words with you. But now to business. These gentlemen, many of whom are known to me as my neighbours, are at liberty to depart—with this advice that they keep peaceably at home, or enroll themselves under the banner of the Parliament; but Master Bachell, his somewhat hasty son, and Master Thomas Luttrell, must submit to remain my prisoners here, or to give me their word, as honourable gentlemen, to appear before whatever tribunal, and at whatever time, Parliament may name, then and

there to answer for the offences with which they stand charged."

"I, for one, shall not yield myself a prisoner, neither shall I pledge my word to obey a set of rebels," said Julian.

"Nor will we quit this hall, and leave our friends to the mercy of Master Pym and his crop-eared knaves," said one of the gentlemen.

"Silence, my son; and do you, my friend, use no provoking words, which may lead to serious consequences. Master Pym will listen to me and to reason," said Bachell.

Pym looked grimly upon Julian and the other speaker, and bowed to Bachell, as if prepared to hear what proposals he had to make.

Master Bachell, whose object was to gain as much time as he could, to enable Alick Pearson to give notice to their friends of the difficulties with which they were surrounded, began what is now termed "speaking against time."

"Master Pym," said he, "will pardon me, if I again ask him if he hath a legal warrant for what he is now proposing to do?"

"None," said Pym, "I act upon my own re-

sponsibility, in the name of the Parliament, and backed by an armed force furnished me by them for this purpose."

"Is the law then, a dead letter, that an Englishman's person and safety are no longer regarded?" said Master Bachell; placing his hand upon Julian's shoulder to restrain him in his seat.

"The government of this realm, nay the nation itself, is, and hath been for some time past, in an unhealthy state. The man, Charles Stuart, hath been found incapable of administering to its safety, and, moreover, guilty of supplying it with poisons in the place of medicaments. We, the Parliament, as the representatives of the people, have undertaken to purge it of its impurities, and to restore it, with the blessing of God, to its pristine soundness," said Master Pym.

A grunt of applause, something between a snuffle and a groan, was uttered by the troopers.

"And wherein hath the king—the man, Charles Stuart, as you most disrespectfully term him—shown his inefficiency?" inquired the elder Bachell, throwing such a look upon his friends, as shewed

them the intention, with which the question was put.

"I will expound to you," said Pym, "and hope, by the few reasons I shall offer, to convince you of the truth of the assertions I have made."

"Would it please you to be seated?" said Julian, "the time required to convince us of the propriety of disloyalty and rebellion will be of so long duration as to cause your legs to ache, if you remain standing upon them."

Pym scowled at Julian, but did not reply to him. He then placed himself in such a position that he might address the gentlemen and his troopers at the same time, without turning his back upon either party. After a loud cough to clear his voice, he turned his eyes up to the ceiling, and thus commenced a long harangue, which we will endeavour to curtail as much as possible.

"You would hear, gentlemen, the reasons on which we have come to a conclusion that he who is called the King—

"*Is* the King," said Julian.

"That he who is *called* the King, is unworthy to rule the land. I will enumerate them.

“ We look upon the man, Charles Stuart, as depraved,

“ Firstly—in his unadvised moving into Spain ; in his obstinate long stay therein, when it was manifest to all the world that the Infanta would not be his ; in his unnecessary submission to the Pope, and his precipitate embarkment at St. Andrews, where he was likely to be cast away.

“ Secondly—we look upon him as depraved in his sudden breach with Spain ; for his shedding of the blood of Englishmen at Amboyna, for mere baubles ; in lending nine ships to the French, to help them to cut the throats of the Protestants.

“ Thirdly—in breaking with the French without sufficient cause assigned ; in the continual abuse of all his allies ; in patching up an inglorious peace with Spain, and in the betrayal of all those nations, which had cast themselves upon this nation for protection.

“ Fourthly—as depraved in the imprisonment of his loyal subjects ; in posting, pilloring, and splitting of the ears of godly divines ; in the introduction of idolatry ; in oppressing the nation, by pres-

tures, monopolies, the exaction of ship-money, and all such grievances.

“Fifthly—in breaking with his people, by dissolving their Parliaments at his pleasure, and thinking to wrestle, with his own single brain, against so many hundreds of representatives, who possess the whole marrow and quintessence of the nation’s wisdom.”

The troopers here uttered a most flattering and assenting grunt. Julian burst out into a loud laugh. Pym heeded neither the one nor the other, but proceeded :

“Sixthly—we look upon the man, Charles Stuart, as depraved and unworthy to rule, in having shielded the Duke of Buckingham,—in having resisted the impeachment and punishment of Strafford—

“The more mad in having signed his death-warrant,” said Julian.

“In upholding the papistical Archbishop of Canterbury, and trying to thrust down the throats of the Scots a ritual and ceremonial which they abhor and detest.

“Seventhly—we abjure, abominate, and from our hearts, do detest the man, Charles—”

"I cannot, as a loyal man and a good subject, submit to listen longer to these foul calumnies," said Master Luttrell.

"Nor I—nor I—nor I—" said the gentlemen rising in a body.

"I will thrust them back down his throat with the hilt of my rapier," said Julian.

"We do from our hearts detest the man, Charles Stuart," continued Pym, not heeding the interruption; "because he did come down to our House of Parliament, in person, to seize my unworthy self, with Sir Arthur Haselrig, and Hampden, and Strode, and Hollis, and did precursorily place in the pillory, and deprive of their ears, Prynne the barrister, Burton the divine, and Bastwick a physician."

"Eighthly"—

"I will hear no more," said Master Luttrell.

"Nor will I," said the elder Bachell. "My end is answered, gentlemen, our friends are arrived. Master Pym, yield yourself our prisoner: your rebellious harangue hath cost you your liberty, and if you resist, your life."

"For God and King Charles!" shouted Julian, as

he drew his sword, sprung by his father, and struck a trooper to the ground.

"For Parliament and the people!" cried Pym, making a pass at the elder Bachell.

The fight became general within the hall, and several wounds were given and received. Amidst the clash of swords and the reports of pistols, Pym's voice was heard. "To the doors! to the doors! let us join our friends without."

The troopers endeavoured to obey their leader's orders; but they had no sooner reached the doors of the dining-hall, than they found themselves attacked by a party of the servants of Ashley-Combe; they again were attacked in their rear by some dozen troopers, who, on hearing the sounds of an attack within, had dismounted, and rushed in, to take their part in the affray. The servants, thus inclosed between the two parties, were soon overpowered; and Pym, followed by Master Bachell and his friends, mingled so thickly together with his troopers as to be unable to strike an effective blow, rushed though the outer hall into the wide space before the Lodge.

"Mount, Master Pym, mount quickly," said

his lieutenant, bringing up his horse ; " mount ; and let us push for the gate, while yet we may. The place is surrounded, and the very woods are filled with men."

Pym placed his foot in the stirrup, and, as he sprung upon his horse, the elder Bachell made a thrust at him, but the armour which he wore on his thigh turned the blade into the horse's flank : a ball, from the pistol of the lieutenant, struck Bachell on the sword arm, which fell powerless by his side.

" I will avenge thee or die," said Julian, as he fiercely attacked the old trooper.

" Nay then, take that, thou young malignant," said the man, as he levelled his second pistol at Julian's head.

" Enough—you have slain the father, hurt not the son," said Pym, as he lifted the pistol with his rapier, and the ball passed harmlessly into the air.

" Keep closely together, and make for the gate," said Pym—" Follow."

The command was easier given than obeyed ; for the road was blocked up by armed men, and by the peasantry, who, having no other weapons to use,

attacked the soldiers with bills, and prongs, and even threshing flails.

"I will avenge my father yet," said Julian, as he mounted a trooper's horse that was without a rider, and followed Pym, who was calmly and coolly pressing forward, backed by his well-trained troops, who dealt death and destruction around them, and without mercy slaughtered all who opposed them.

"Reserve your fire, until we reach the gate," shouted Pym. "Now then—fire and charge."

The effect of the volley and the charge of the heavy horse that immediately followed it was to dislodge the party who were posted there, and to allow Pym and his troopers, reduced to about half their number, to escape.

"Stop, stop, thou disloyal man, thou murderer of my father!" screamed Julian, as he urged his horse on in close pursuit of Pym. "Coward! he hears, but will not obey."

"Halt!" cried Pym, when his troop had ridden beyond the ranks of the footmen, who had attacked him.

The troop halted. Pym rode back to meet Julian, who attacked him fiercely. Pym, being an

admirable swordsman, disarmed him, and bade him ride back, and see that his friends showed the same mercy to their enemies as he had twice shown to him.

Julian, crying for very vexation, turned slowly back to the Lodge. Pym placed himself at the head of his men, and, entering the woods above the Lodge, rode quickly towards his home.

CHAPTER VII.

THE scene that presented itself to Julian's eyes, when he returned to the Lodge, was truly a fearful one. His father lay fainting from pain and loss of blood in the arms of Alick Pearson, whilst Janet was bathing his temples with cold water and crying piteously. Master Luttrell stood near him, bleeding from a deep cut in his shoulder. Some score of troopers lay dead on the ground amidst their horses, (which had been hamstrung, and thus disabled, by the bills of the peasantry) and a heap of dead and dying men. The few troopers who had survived the attack were severely wounded, principally with pitchforks and other implements, which had been thrust into them beneath their harness, and had inflicted almost cureless wounds.

"My father!" said Julian, "he is dying—and I stand here disarmed and dishonoured!"

"I trust not dying," said Master Luttrell. "Take courage; bind up my wound tightly, and I will see what good my slight skill in surgery will do for your father."

Julian bound up Master Luttrell's shoulder, and then assisted him to lay bare his father's arm.

"The ball hath passed through, and the bone is unbroken. A bandage to stop the bleeding, and a stimulant administered internally, will, an I am not deceived, speedily restore him to you."

Janet tore the kerchief from her fair neck, and the bandage was soon applied. Alick ran for some spirit, and as soon as it was administered, Master Bachell shewed signs of recovery, and, a few minutes afterwards, was able to recognise and embrace his son.

"Bear him within, Alick," said Julian, "while I see to the safety of those of our foes, who may still have life left within them."

"Right, Julian, let us be merciful as we hope to obtain mercy ourselves," said Master Luttrell. "I will bear you company."

"I have obtained mercy twice to-day, and from the hands of Pym," said Julian; "but I would that I had died rather than have been saved by him."

"See there, Julian, ycn fellow with his flail is about to give the finishing stroke to a dying but still resisting trooper," shouted Master Luttrell.

"Stay your hand, fellow, or I will cut you down," said Julian.

"A moment later, sir, and I should have served the crop-eared rogue, as I served one of his precious brood but a day or two since, at the mouth of Dunkery mines," said the fellow.

"What mean you?" inquired Master Luttrell.

"Curse them, their blood runs as red as honest men's! I pistolled Master Mauworth, more methinks to satisfy me of that fact than from any real ill-will I bore him," said the man.

"And why did you pistol him, and thus, as I believe, prove the cause of all the bloodshed that has taken place this day?" asked Julian.

"Because he met us with a crop of spirits with which Master Tudball had entrusted us to convey them to Taunton," said the man, "and

threatened to inform against us. He might have escaped with a sound drubbing, had he not aggravated us with a long discourse on the ungodliness of our calling, and had we not broached one of the kegs as we lay up waiting for night. He struck me first, however, so that I count myself justified in having killed him in my own defence."

"Thus does one crime lead to another and a greater," said Master Luttrell; "but let us on, and see what more may be done."

After a stop had been put to all further ill-treatment of the wounded troopers, and the peasantry had been dismissed to their homes, a consultation was held within as to the best plan of proceeding.

After much discussion, it was agreed upon that Master Bachell and Julian, taking with them all their plate, jewellery, and valuables, should leave the Lodge, as an hospital for the wounded, under the charge of Alick Pearson and a strong body of tenantry, and go with Master Luttrell to Dunster Castle, which, they conceived, would be a much safer asylum than the Lodge. The bodies of the dead men and their horses were dragged off to a pit

in the wood below the Lodge and buried as hastily as possible, excepting the bodies of those who were known as neighbours and friends. These were conveyed on hurdles and in waggons, and buried in the churchyard of Porlock.

About eight in the evening of a bright day in June, the cavalcade set out from Ashley-Combe for Dunster. The elder Bachell, now strong enough to bear the journey, though suffering from pain, rode at its head, with Master Luttrell by his side. The mounted tenantry rode next, to protect the plate and other valuables carried by men on foot, and Julian brought up the rear, with a few of the trained bands, whom he himself had exercised.

They met with nothing to obstruct them on the way, except parties of friends, who having, though too late to render any assistance, heard of the attack on the Lodge, were hastening to its defence. Among them was a strong body of men, half landmen and half seamen, headed by Giles Tudball, Will Bowering, and Alloway, the wrestling butcher. These all fell in with the procession, and accompanied it to Dunster, breathing vengeance

against Master Pym, and entreating Julian to lead them on to attack him in his mansion at Cutcombe, whither he had, as they imagined and rightly, fled for safety and to recruit his strength.

Hugh de Mohun had been wearing out the long and tedious day, in thinking over the past meeting with Prudence Everard and in examining the papers which had been delivered to him by Basil Chiper. They consisted of letters in the French language, some in the writing of a female hand, others in that of a male. They all breathed an air of burning affection, but were of so vague a nature, and all without address or signature, that, after perusing a few of them, Hugh felt but little interest in their contents. He read them through, however, and then tied them up carefully, and deposited them in his vest.

"I must rely on Providence to disclose to me, at its own good time, the mystery of my birth," said he. "In the mean while, let me but be restored to health again, and I will use such means to gain me a name as shall be approved of by my friends. Prudence, dear Prudence! I will win thee or die!"

As he said this, Hugh placed upon his finger the ring which she had given him at parting, and kissed it fervently.

He then threw himself back on his couch, and gazed through his open casement upon the green slopes of Dunster park.

What his thoughts were may be easily guessed ; but he was not allowed to indulge in them long uninterrupted. The door of his chamber was opened hastily, and Basil Chipera, greatly perturbed in his looks, entered.

"Here is your draught and your posset, Master Hugh—and here be rare doings too beside," said Basil.

"Lay your medicines and your posset aside, and give me your news, Master Chipera : by your looks, they should be important. Hath the tame doe been a-plucking the leaves of your favourite lemon tree, or cropping the great myrtle of which you are so proud?"

"Here hath been fighting, and blood-shedding, and deaths to boot, and he asks me about a paltry shrub and a tame doe," said Basil.

"Some ale-house brawl, doubtless, or a skir-

mish between the hill wrestlers and the Minehead men."

"There hath a war been begun. Master Pym hath attacked Ashley-Combe, and burnt it to the ground. Master Bachell is shot dead, his son is badly wounded, and the good Master Luttrell is being borne, with but little life in him, on a litter to the Castle, and yet he talks of lemon trees and myrtles," said Chipera.

"Is this true?" said Hugh.

"As true as that I am a sinner," said Basil.

"Of whom had you these news?" inquired Hugh, doubting the truth of the story, although so firmly asserted.

"From Master Jefferies, who hath just returned from Minyeard, whither he hath been for stores for the Castle, and provender for the troop horses. Giles Tudball, and others you wot of, with a band of the Minyeard men, sailors and landfolks, are gone, as hastily as legs will carry them, over Greenaleigh hill, to their succour. And here is Master Hamnet Hele a-collecting his troops together, and preparing to follow them, and—"

"And I am compelled to lie here, weak as an

infant, whilst my friends are being murdered. I will not submit, however ; I can ride, though I cannot walk—no—nor even stand, but I can ride. Order me a horse instantly," said Hugh, rising from his couch, on which Basil replaced him as he would have done a child.

" Ride, quoth he ? much good you would be of, when you got to Ashley-Combe," said Basil.

" Unhand me, sirrah, and obey my orders. Bid them bring out a horse—"

" And whither would an invalid ride, at such an hour as this ?" said Colonel Wyndham, entering the room.

" Either he lieth foully, the caitiff, or our presence is needed at Ashley-Combe," said Hugh.

" Quit this apartment, Master Chipera, and do your duty as warder of the gate, where your presence will speedily be needed," said the colonel.

" Lemon trees and mrytles, quoth he ! and to call me caitiff—well, well," said Basil, as he left the room.

" Sir John Wyndham," said Hugh, " If you have any pity for one well-nigh mad, tell me quickly, and tell me truly, what hath occurred."

" Be calm, Hugh. There hath been a skir-

mish at Ashley-Combe. It is over. None of your friends are seriously hurt, and a short half hour, as I am advised, will see them safely within the walls of the Castle."

"Who hath been hurt? speak, sir, and speak truly," said Hugh.

The elder Bachell hath been stricken by a bullet in the arm, and Master Luttrell suffers from a sabre-cut in the shoulder," said the colonel.

"And Julian, my friend Julian?" inquired Hugh eagerly.

"Hath escaped unscathed—all will be here anon," said Sir John.

"I thank God it is no worse; but if the same false news be reported at Luxborough, as that ass, for I cannot call him by a less significant name, brought to me even now, it will occasion much grief and distress of mind to Mistress Luttrell and to those who have retreated there with her," said Hugh.

"That shall be cared for, as soon as our friends arrive," said the colonel. "I will despatch a messenger to them instanter."

"Nay, let me ride over at once, before the false

intelligence can reach them: it will save much misery," said Hugh.

"I would not hesitate to yield to your request, did I believe you capable of accomplishing the journey," said the colonel; "but, if my ears do not deceive me, a body of horsemen are now passing through the streets of Dunster, on their march to the Castle. I will meet them, and dispatch one of them to Luxborough before he dismounts."

"Select a speedy messenger, I entreat you; and see that he have his tale correct," said Hugh.

Colonel Wyndham left de Mohun, and hastened to the gate of the Castle, where he met Master Luttrell and the advance of the cavalcade. He greeted them cheerfully, and congratulated them on their success, at the same time expressing his regret that he had not been present in person to witness the repulse of the parliamentarians in their first attempt to subdue the royalists in the West.

"You will not be long before an opportunity is given you to witness another struggle, Sir John," said the elder Bachell; "if I am not wrong in the opinion I have formed of Master Pym, he is not likely to lie quiet under the insult he hath this

day received. Let us in, and look to the defence of this Castle."

"One moment, Master Bachell, strange news of this trifling affair have already been brought to the Castle, and caused no little dismay; as you may conceive, when I announce to you, that it roused the young invalid, Hugh de Mohun, to order a horse to be saddled, that he might ride over to Luxborough. It will be needful to send some speedy horseman thither, to bear a true account of what hath happened, before our fair friends are alarmed by rumours, which will gain in improbability the farther they are carried," said the colonel.

"I will away, instantly," said Julian.

"Do so—you can explain everything fully: ride across the park, and over Withycombe hill, which will save you some mile in distance; but take an escort with you, for fear of—"

"I fear nothing, father; I will be back before night-fall yet," said Julian, as he struck his spurs into his horse, and passed the Castle towards the park.

"Now then," said the colonel, "let us in, and as

briefly as we may, put things in train for a defence of the town and Castle."

While the consultation was going on within the Castle, the town was in a bustle. The willing Dunster men were clearing out every out-house and building, that could be converted into stables for the troopers' horses. Others were erecting temporary sheds for the same purpose; while the women were preparing their chambers, for sleeping-rooms for the men. Sumpter-horses and tumbril-carts were dispatched in all directions to procure food for men and fodder for horses, and no means were left untried, to render the defenders of Dunster as comfortable as possible.

Master Robert Quirke assembled the Mine-head men at the Luttrell Arms, and, whilst they consumed a cask of ale, which he had ordered to be broached, he proposed to them to return and occupy as barracks the alms-houses which he had been erecting, and which were already roofed in.

A loud hurrah proclaimed the acceptableness of his proposal.

"I will," said he, "at mine own proper cost, provide room for and maintain two score mounted

troopers and their horses; so let those of the Dunster tenantry here assembled, who are willing to accept of mine offer, march with us at once."

Upwards of fifty men presented themselves to his notice, and the only difficulty was to make a selection. It was done by drawing lots, and before colonel Wyndham and his friends within the Castle had ended their consultation, Quirke was on his road to Minehead, at the head of his little troop, having left Giles Tudball to announce what arrangements he had made for the protection of the port of Minehead.

On their arrival in Minehead, Will Bowering was ordered to see that every vessel in the harbour was thoroughly inspected, and if any persons found on board were deemed disloyal, to send them ashore, and place them under the surveillance of the troopers. The vessels themselves were to be prepared to set sail at a moment's notice, in case they should be needed for the service of the royalists.

The only two persons in Minehead who raised any objections to these arrangements were Dame Tudball and Mistress Bowering, who agreed—and it was almost the only occasion on which they

did agree—that this marshalling of troopers and preparing of ships would afford a plausible excuse to their husbands for being absent from their homes.

Old Richard Luckes, the harbour-master, was perhaps, of all persons, the most delighted at the bustle into which the little town was thrown; for he saw in it a fair prospect of great gain to his son, in the consumption of the good things afforded by his hostel the Ship Aground; and to himself, of a participation in sundry kegs of strong waters, which he doubted not would be broached upon so momentous an occasion.

Colonel Sir John Wyndham, having been authorized by Master Luttrell to take upon himself the command of Dunster Castle, exercised the power delegated to him, in the first place, by ordering the wounded to their beds and to the inspection of the mediciner, who had been summoned to dress their hurts. In this he was not very readily obeyed, for both Master Luttrell and the elder Bachell were anxious to be present at the council of war, if so it might be termed, where one man alone was capable of giving advice which might be safely acted upon. The colonel, how-

ever, was firm, and, before he sat down to make his arrangements, saw both of his friends in the care of the leech of Dunster.

It will be needless to recount, in detail, the plans that were adopted for the defence of the Castle and town; it will be sufficient to say, that parties were placed so as to guard every approach from the interior of the country. A strong body was posted on the side of Conygar hill, which commanded both the town and Castle, which were protected on the Channel side, by the judicious arrangements of Master Robert Quirke, and of which Colonel Wyndham could not but approve, when they were duly reported to him by Giles Tudball.

One difficulty presented itself which seemed invincible. They were deficient in artillery. The guns of the Castle, upon examination, proved to be so much corroded, as to be what is technically termed, honey-combed, with the exception of some half-dozen small cannon, which were used to fire salutes upon certain festival occasions within the Castle.

The colonel, although he was aware that the

discharge of the larger guns might prove more injurious to his friends than his foes, ordered them to be mounted on their carriages, and appointed men to serve them, in order that their very appearance on the battlements might impress an advancing enemy with the notion that they might prove serviceable.

As it was necessary to have cannon which would be effective, in case the Castle was attacked, Giles Tudball undertook to cross the Channel, in the Blossom of Minehead, during the night, and procure them, as well as a supply of ball and other ammunitions of war, from the Castle of Cardiff.

Before the bell of the new clock in the tower of Dunster church had proclaimed the hour of twelve, Colonel Wyndham had retired to rest, with a firm conviction that he had done all that a soldier could do, for the protection of Dunster and its immediate neighbourhood.

CHAPTER VIII.

WE must leave Dunster for a while, and follow Julian Bachell, or rather, accompany him to Luxborough-Everard.

When the horse and his rider are both willing, a distance of four miles and a half, or five miles, is speedily traversed: neither whip nor spur is needed. Julian, however, was so eager to anticipate the arrival of any exaggerated report of the events at Ashley-Combe, that he drove the rowels of his spurs deep into the flanks of his generous steed, and accomplished the journey before him in about twenty minutes, in spite of the badness of the paths over which his route lay.

It was dark for a midsummer night, when he pulled up his horse at the door of Colonel Wyndham's house. Lights were burning in the room

which was usually occupied as a common sitting room by the family, and the windows were open to admit the cool air, which, being mingled with the perfumes of the jasmine and myrtle, that grew profusely on the walls of the mansion, was rendered delightful to those who had been oppressed by the heat of a bright June day.

Julian flung the bridle on his horse's neck, and, turning his head towards the stables, left him to find his way to them as he best might. He did not announce his presence by ringing at the porch, but at once approached the open window of the room wherein the lights were burning. He looked in, and saw Prudence Everard sitting alone, reading, with more than common attention, a book lying on a table before her. He stepped lightly upon the rush-covered floor of the apartment, indeed so lightly that his footfalls did not disturb the fair reader. He looked over her shoulder, and saw that she was deeply engaged with the *Othello* of Shakspeare.

These words caught his eye.

"She loved me for the dangers I had passed ;
And I loved her, that she did pity them."

"A plausible reason truly!" said Julian.

Prudence started from her seat, and the volume fell to the ground.

"Mistress Everard must find deep interest indeed, in the fictions of a play-writer, if she cannot hear the heavy sounds of a horse's hoofs, within some yards of her open casement," said Julian.

"And Master Bachell must have forgotten somewhat of his courtesy, thus to frighten me," said Prudence. "But what brings you here thus late?"

"That very question relieves me of much anxiety. Have no news reached you from Ashley-Combe or Dunster?"

"None: all are well I trust," said Prudence.

"At Ashley-Combe, or Dunster, mean you?" inquired Julian.

"At both, for I have friends as well at the one place as at the other. But you have somewhat important to communicate: I read it in your looks. Speak it out, sir, and fear not that I shall be able to bear them, though the news be bad."

"Where is Lady Wyndham? and Mistress Luttrell, where is she? I have that to tell that concerns them to know."

"Master Bachell, you alarm me. Speak, I beg of you. Is Master Luttrell well? hath aught befallen your father? is your friend, the invalid—Hugh de Mohun—is he worse?" said Prudence earnestly.

"I have a message to deliver to Lady Wyndham from her husband," said Julian.

"I will summon her hither—but do tell me that you bring no ill news to her."

"Of that I will assure you," said Julian.

"Nor to Mistress Luttrell?"

"None."

"Then it must be to me, and Hugh de Mohun is—but I will summon them," said Prudence, as she left the room.

"A curse light on that Mohun!—I hate him—but I will plant such a thorn in both their bosoms ere long, as shall rankle in them for life; unless indeed—but here come the ladies, and now to my tale."

In a few words, Julian, assuming a placid brow, recounted the events of the day, and made lighter of the wound received by Master Luttrell than he had meant to do, when he saw the distress into which his story had plunged his lady.

"I will to Dunster instantly," said she.

"Pardon me, madam, but it must not be. My instructions are, that you abide here patiently. It is the colonel's wish that his tenantry be put under arms in the morning, to guard you here, until the plans of Master Pym be ascertained," said Julian.

"It is needless, Master Bachell; for Mistress Pym and myself have lived together as if we had been sisters, and I fear nothing from that quarter," said Lady Wyndham.

"It is your husband's wish; and well he knoweth that, when once civil rage shall have burst forth, all previous ties of friendship will easily be broken," said Julian.

"Then you, sir, shall remain here for the night, and see to the summoning the tenantry in the morning, unless duty calls you back to Dunster," said the colonel's lady.

"Julian Bachell is too courteous to leave three ladies unprotected, when they solicit his protection," said Mistress Luttrell.

"I will remain and gladly," said Julian; "Dunster is sufficiently well guarded, and it will be plea-

sing to Sir John, that I can report to him, on my return to-morrow, that arrangements have been made for the present safety of those whom he holds dear."

"We will, then, return to the children for a short space, and leave you to entertain Prudence Everard," said Mistress Luttrell.

Prudence resumed her book, when the elder ladies had quitted the room; for the young man did not seem inclined to afford her the entertainment suggested to him. He unbuckled the rapier from his thigh, and tossed it, with his plumed hat, into a corner of the apartment. He then stalked to the window, and, reclining against the wall, seemed to be amusing himself by gazing out upon the pleasing scene before him—a hilly country, lighted by a rising moon.

Prudence, who was really deeply interested in the magic pages of the bard of Avon, soon forgot that such a person as Julian Bachell was near her; but her memory was speedily refreshed by his advancing to her and drawing a chair close to her side.

"If," said he, "the companion of my childhood can for a moment lay aside the book which seems

to enchant her senses, and listen to me, she will confer a favour on me."

"Certainly," replied Prudence, closing the volume. "Speak out, Master Bachell, and speak plainly; have you disguised aught of danger to her husband from my guardian?"

"You had used to call me Julian—for years you have done so. Why am I now, in formal speech, addressed as Master Bachell? Are your feelings changed towards me?"

"In no wise. I ever respected and esteemed you, and do so now. But years have passed over us, and what was allowable and appropriate in the girl would be unbecoming in the maiden," said Prudence.

"Esteem—respect—they be cold words to one, who has loved you long, and who loves you now more fervently than ever," said Julian, seizing her hand.

"An you be serious, Master Bachell, I must quit you—but you do but jest—we have played together as infants, romped together in later years, and now you deem that such innocent passages in our young lives authorize you to trifle with me thus."

"Prudence, dearest Prudence, listen to me," cried Julian, falling on his knees at her feet. "I do not trifle with you. I love you in all sincerity, and would seek your love in exchange. I have loved you long, but knew not how fervently, until—until—"

"When, Master Bachell? speak plainly, for these are news to me," said Prudence, attempting to withdraw her hand.

"I will speak plainly, dear Prudence; until I saw you regard another with kindlier looks than ever you bestowed on me," said Julian.

"This, Master Bachell, is language as unmanly in you to utter as it is unmaidenly in me to hear. I pray you unhand me," said Prudence rising.

"Not until you have heard me out, Prudence: after some seventeen years of close intimacy, I may be forgiven for urging claims on those affections, which you seem disposed to lavish on the friend of a day. Who and what is Hugh de Mohun, that he should steal from me a treasure dearer to me than life itself?"

"Unhand me, sir—or I—"

"Who is he? the son of nobody—what is he?"

"An honourable man, who would not treat an unprotected girl thus cruelly."

"A man without a name—one basely born and dependent on the bounty of a stranger for the very bread he eats and the bed he lies on. Prudence Everard, at your feet I offer you myself and my fortunes—will you spurn my offer?"

"Nothing that hath passed between us can authorize this unseemly behaviour, Master Bachell; rise sir, and unhand me, or I must call in my guardian to protect me," said Prudence.

"I will not release you until you accept my offer, or own your love for a more favoured rival," said Julian. "I, a man of unblemished descent, of ample fortunes, the companion of your infancy, proffer you my heart and my hand. A nameless, portionless boy, the child of shame, perhaps of infamy, the friend of yesterday—hath dared to own himself my rival. It remains for you to choose between us."

"This is mere midsummer madness, Master Bachell; I intreat you, sir, to leave me. You can never be to me more than you have been—a friend and companion," said Prudence.

"I am answered, spurned, and rejected," said Julian, rising. "But, let the base-born boy look to himself! I am not to be wronged with impunity."

"Shame to you, sir; is it thus you speak of your friend, in the presence of one who esteems him, and is indebted to him for her life?"

"Say, truly and plainly, who loves him—but call him not my friend. Henceforth we are enemies," said Julian, as he rushed out of the open window upon the lawn.

Prudence Everard was not left for many moments to meditate upon the unexpected scene that had passed. The older ladies returned to summon her and Julian to the supper-room. To their inquiries for Julian, she could only reply that he had not long quitted her. A servant was despatched to seek him, and in a few minutes he returned with him. Every trace of his former agitation was removed from his brow, and he sat down to the meal, after accounting for his absence by saying that he had been to secure his horse, as calmly as if nothing had occurred to ruffle his temper.

As soon as he reached his chamber, however, to which he retired early, under the plea of being

fatigued, he gave vent to his angry passions in burning words and bitter tears. Morning found him pacing the floor, and meditating on plans of vengeance against Hugh de Mohun. He threw himself upon his bed and courted sleep, but it would not visit him. Finding the attempt vain, he arose, and sought the bailiff of Luxborough, and roused him to collect the tenantry, alleging, in excuse for doing so at such an early hour, the necessity of his returning to Dunster with all speed.

The bailiff was not in the best of humours at being disturbed at such an unseasonable time, and added to Julian's previous annoyances by saying that "he thought his master, Sir John, might have had sufficient confidence in one, who had served him so long, to do all that was needful in such an emergency, or sent an experienced person, like Hamnet Hele, to order him about, instead of a mere boy."

"I shall report this insolence to the colonel, sirrah; upon the authority entrusted to me, I bid you out instantly, and summon every man capable of bearing arms to meet me on the lawn within the hour," said Julian.

"And what if they refuse to obey?" said the bailiff.

"When they are apprised of Sir John's wishes and the dangers which beset his family, there is not a man among them will refuse, or if there be such, I will take upon myself to inflict such a punishment upon him as shall teach him to behave better for the future. Out, sirrah! and deliver my summons."

The man obeyed, but slowly and reluctantly, for the tones and manner of Julian were offensive, and such as he had never seen in his master. Julian, chafed in temper, and wounded in his feelings, passed two tedious hours in parading the pleasure-grounds before the tenantry arrived; and, when they did arrive, probably from the account they had heard from the bailiff of Julian's overbearing manner, they did not greet him cordially, or show much zeal in the execution of the commands he issued to them. Having done all that he deemed necessary for the security of Luxborough, he mounted his horse, and, without waiting to pay his respects to the ladies, rode back to Dunster Castle, to report to the colonel that his ten-

antry, to the best of his belief, were disaffected to him, and entered upon their duties as protectors of his family tardily and unwillingly.

"It cannot be," said the colonel, "I know them to be loyally disposed to a man; and my bailiff, who hath served me ever since I purchased the property, is—"

"An insolent menial, who called me a mere boy, and at first refused to act upon my orders," said Julian.

"There must be some mistake. I will not fail to investigate the matter, and reprove him if he deserve reproof."

"If, *if!*" said Julian, as he flung out of the apartment. "Even he insults me by doubting my word."

As ill-luck would have it, the first person whom Julian met after leaving sir Thomas Wyndham was the apothecary of Dunster, who positively refused him admission to his father, upon the plea that he was under the influence of an opiate, and stood in need of perfect quiet.

"I will see Master Luttrell, then," said Julian. "I have that to communicate which will justify me in attending on him."

"It may not be, Master Bachell. The same medicine is doing its office for him. The slightest disturbance might obviate its good effects," said the leech. "It is but a remede left by a wandering drug-seller, but its effects are marvellous, and it hath wrought wonders on your friend, Hugh de Mohun, who is fast approaching to convalescence."

Julian started at the name; but, repressing the feelings to which the mention of it gave rise, inquired as calmly as he could, whether Hugh was yet stirring.

"It is early yet, for an invalid to be stirring, the clock of Dunster church has but just sounded seven; but I have nought to do with the young student: he hath been entrusted to the care of Basil Chipera. I wish you a good morning sir."

"By my faith," said Julian, "they all seem in a conspiracy against me. Even this ignorant ass of an apothecary treats me as if I were nobody. I will seek Basil Chipera, and, if his report be such as to justify me in so doing, I will seek an interview with this youthful bastard, who has won the affections of one to whom he had no right to aspire."

Basil Chipera was, as usual, when he could escape from other engagements, on the south side of the Castle, busily employed with his lemon tree and his myrtles. He both saw and heard Julian Bachell approach him, but he chose to feign blindness and deafness, and went on pruning there, laying in here, and nailing up in another place, as though no one was near him. He had taken a dislike to Julian, because he thought that, since the death of Master Snelling and the illness consequent upon it, he had not shewn that kindness and attention to Hugh, which their previous intimacy demanded. He had thought his manner, too, somewhat suspicious, upon the occasion of his going to the sick-room, to deliver the papers entrusted to him by Graveboys.

To Julian's inquiry whether his patient were yet stirring, he replied, by chanting a verse probably of his own composing—

Let Devonshire boast of its apples red,
And France of its clustering vine,
And Italy's sons of the olive green,
The myrtle, the myrtle be mine.
With its leaves so dark, its blossoms fair,
Its perfume that loads the gale,
Its sprig that adorneth each fair one's hair;
So hail to the myrtle, hail!

"Now that that unseemly noise hath ceased, I would beg of you, Master Basil Chipera, to answer to my question," said Julian.

"Hail to the myrtle, hail!" sung Basil, prolonging the last note, and flourishing his pruning knife over his head.

"I demand of you, whether Master Hugh be awake yet," said Julian, laying his hand rudely on the other's shoulder, "and you reply to me in a tone, that would startle a horse, worse than the screaming of a pea-fowl."

"Awake? I know not whether he be awake or not at this present time: he was so but now, when I administered to him his morning potion," said Basil; "so hail to the myrtle, hail!"

"Is his health so far mended, that I might demand admittance of him? I would speak with him."

"Time was, and not long since, when Julian Bachel would not have waited to ask for admittance to the sick chamber of his friend. But all things change, like the leaves and blossoms of the myrtle," said Basil, proceeding to prune his favourite.

"But his health?"

"Had you visited him, as it was your duty, you

had no need to inquire," said Basil; "so hail to the myrtle, hail!"

"You are insolent, sirrah; and, were it not for your years, my riding-wand and your back should be intimately acquainted. Go, ask Master Hugh de Mohun if I may converse with him."

"The postern-door is open; you know your way, and can e'en put the query to him yourself," said Basil.

Julian raised his riding-whip, and would have struck him, but he controlled the impulse, and, turning away with a fierce oath, sought the apartment of Hugh de Mohun.

"Welcome, Julian! right welcome! I deemed you had forsaken me," said Hugh, stretching forth his hand.

Julian did not accept it, but, turning towards the window, opened the casement.

"Thanks, Julian! thanks!—the fresh air is most acceptable to me: but why have we met so seldom of late?"

"These be busy times," said Julian, "and a man of loyal spirit hath more of importance to attend to than act the nurse to a sick youth."

"Not if that youth be the friend of his bosom," said Hugh.

"I know not that that title is applicable to you, as regardeth myself. I would ascertain it by putting certain interrogatories to you, if you deem yourself sufficiently convalescent to attend to them," said Julian.

"I am well enough advanced in recovery to listen, and reply to any thing that you may have to say to me," said Hugh.

"I would merely resolve myself of this: hath any declaration of love been made by you to Mistress Everard?"

"Assuredly: why should I deny it? I have announced to her the affection I bear her."

"And she? hath she promised to return it?"

"I did not press her that far, Julian. In the mystery in which I am at present involved, I deem it dishonourable to extract any confession from Prudence Everard. I doubt not her love for me, however, and when I shall have unfolded the mystery, or made a name and fortune for myself, I shall claim her hand—always with the permission of her guardians."

"Who doubtless have pledged themselves to favour your suit?"

"Not pledged—I cannot use so strong a term, but I have reasons for believing that they will do so," said Hugh. "Would that I were well enough to set out upon my career at once!"

"Listen to me, sir. All further intimacy between us must cease."

"How so, Julian?" said Hugh, trying to read the other's meaning in his face.

"I am a suitor for the hand of Prudence Everard."

"And what possible claim can you urge for her favour?" asked Hugh amazed.

"I have been her companion and friend from my childhood. I am able to offer her a name, over which the shadow of dishonour hath never passed. I have a home too, to offer her, and a fortune becoming her rank and station. Can you say as much?"

"Julian this is cruel and cowardly to boot," said Hugh.

"I leave you—and will not see you again until your health be fully restored. I shall then throw myself in your path, and call you base-born and

penniless, and shall be prepared—but you understand me," said Julian, as he touched the hilt of his rapier, and left the room.

He had not reached the foot of the staircase before his conduct appeared to him in its proper light. He felt that he had acted a cruel and cowardly part, thus to agitate and insult a sick man. He felt almost inclined to return and unsay all that he had said, and to crave pardon of his former friend. But the spirit of evil was at work within him. He thought of Prudence Everard, and her rejection of his suit; of the insults that had been passed upon him in the early morning; and he closed the postern, with a resolve to persevere in the mad course he had adopted.

CHAPTER IX.

A FORTNIGHT passed away. Nothing of importance had occurred at Dunster or its neighbourhood. Pym was still at Cutcombe, waiting, it was said, for forces from the parliament, provided with artillery, and sufficiently powerful to attack the Castle. Colonel Wyndham was actively engaged in providing for its defence. The large guns brought over by Giles Tudball from Cardiff were already mounted. The keep was well furnished with ammunition of all sorts; and such a store of provisions, alive and dead, was collected, as would suffice to supply the troops for twelve months or more.

Hugh de Mohun had nearly recovered his strength, and was allowed to take exercise on the terrace of the Castle, and to ride in the park. He saw nothing

of Julian Bachell, who, as Basil Chipera informed him, had returned to Ashley-Combe with his father, when the surgeon had pronounced him fit to travel so far; for it required a master's hand to govern the armed tenantry, who, having nothing else to do, spent their time in drinking to the health of the king and confusion to the parliament, and in quarrelling with one another.

Prudence Everard was still at Luxborough, with her guardian and the children, and messages passed to and fro daily, in which kind inquiries after the progress of the Dunster student were not forgotten, though they were made in the name of Mistress Luttrell.

Master Luttrell's wound had healed, and he spent more of his time at Luxborough than at Dunster, although he always returned to that fortress at night.

"Here is one below seeks admission to you sir," said Basil Chipera to Hugh de Mohun.

"Who is it?" said Hugh; "hath he not a name?"

"Yea, and a good one with us, who are loyal and love the contrabandists," said Basil.

"The latter, as being friends of the king, doubtless?"

"To a man. They hate the parliament, especially since it hath put a tax upon beer. The article is now exciseable, and hath been raised in its price in consequence," said Basil.

"The better, one would opine, for the traders in freely imported spirits, seeing that their articles will be more in demand," said Hugh.

"In part your opinion is true, in part false. The smuggler, or as they like the better to be named, the free trader, hath enough of his own importing while at sea : when on land, he is glad to exchange Nantz and Scheidam for wholesome malt brewings."

"Who is it who would speak with me? you forget that while you are discoursing so learnedly on the value of exciseable articles to the free trader, you are leaving one of that respectable guild cooling himself at the Castle gates," said Hugh.

"It is one who is anxious to know if illness hath driven from the student's head and heart the memory of certain folks, with whose company he once was content to be delighted."

"Pish, man, 'tis Giles Tudball, or his lying mate, Will Bowering. Why not admit him at once?" said Hugh, smiling.

"I would have done so freely, and upon my own responsibility, for I know that thou art not changed as some would accuse you of being, but Colonel Wyndham will not allow any one to enter or pass from the Castle, unless upon the solicitation of an inmate of responsibility, made to himself or Hamnet Hele in writing."

"Follow me to the library, and I will write the request you need."

Basil took the order for admission to be countersigned by the colonel, and returned with Giles Tudball.

"Giles," said Hugh, extending his hand, "I am right glad to see you."

"God bless you then," said Giles, "for folks said it would be otherwise."

"Why so? why should they deem that I, who have been sick and ill, but no otherwise indisposed to join my friends, should not be glad to welcome again those with whom I have passed so many

happy hours, and from whom I have received so many kindnesses?"

"I know not now you come to ask me plainly; but I really believe that Will Bowering, who hath had a lying fever so long upon him, hath been so much among the Dunster men of late, that they have all caught the infection," said Giles.

"What hast heard then? what false reports have been spread to the detriment of Master Hugh?" asked Basil.

"And why dip your oar into waters that are sufficiently muddled, without your helping to stir up the ooze?"

"Nay; speak him kindly, Giles, and speak openly. Basil Chipera hath been too kind a nurse, not to be allowed to share in aught that concerns me."

"Bravely done, Basil, and boldly and nobly spoken, Master Hugh! Never forget the man that doeth thee a benefit, however humble he may be. It is said, that Master Hugh de Mohun is sick at heart, for the love of a fair maiden, who left the Castle to avoid his importunities, seeing that he

hath neither a name nor a fortune to bestow on her ; that he hath quarrelled with Master Julian Bachell, who hath a long established claim on her affections, and, having openly insulted him, hath pleaded the weakness consequent upon ill-health to avoid giving him the meeting, which gentlemen are wont to concede under circumstances of much slighter provocation."

"They lie—lie—lie that say it," said Basil, "and I would rip up with my pruning knife the body which bears the tongue that uttereth the foul scandal, belong it to gentle or simple."

"Silence, good Basil ! I doubt not your zeal on my behalf ; but Master Giles Tudball will believe me, when I tell him calmly, that the statement is false, though it hath a foundation. I am at present, by the sudden death of my tutor, good Master Snelling, under a cloud of doubt, as it were, about my birth and fortunes ; but I hope the sun of certainty may one day or other disperse that cloud ; if not, I will, with the favour of God, and the help of my own good arm, earn me a name."

"And a more honourable way of acquiring one, than by inheritance," said Chipera.

"As to other reports, I would be silent on them, Giles, for reasons which your own good sense will suggest to you, merely observing that, if Master Bachell feels himself aggrieved, he knows where to find me any and every day, for I never quit the precincts of the Castle," said Hugh.

"My argument—my own argument to a word," said Giles. "But let us say no more about it. I am here, Master Hugh, to ask your advice in a more serious matter."

"Ask it, and if I feel myself justified in giving it, rely upon me," said Hugh.

"Ay, rely upon its being worth receiving," said Basil proudly.

"It is this—Idleness begetteth mischief, as the proverb saith. For a fortnight nothing has occurred to amuse or employ the troops collected around Dunster. The beer barrels are exhausted; cider is not to be had for money, and tobacco groweth scarce; skittles and bowls cease to afford recreation, and every song hath been sung over and over again, until it palleth upon the ear."

"Like Master Browne's sermon on regeneration in after life, which he dinged into our lugs,

sabbath after sabbath, until we were sick of it," said Basil.

"Well Giles, this is the account of the idleness, now for the mischief that it hath wrought," said Hugh.

"It hath been proposed to turn the attacker into the attacked; to sally out at night, to make Master Pym a prisoner or a corpse, and to burn his mansion to the ground."

"And who is the concocter of this cruel scheme?"

"It is the result of loose talk rather than of any regular plan," said Giles.

"And is it proposed to acquaint Colonel Wyndham or Master Luttrell with the design?"

"By no means. It is to be executed without their knowledge."

"And upon whom have they fixed as the leader, in so glorious an enterprize?"

"Hugh de Mohun. They hold it out to him, as a means of recovering their lost favour."

"Then do you, Giles, return to those who sent you hither to insult me, and tell them that, though my nerves be strong again and my sinews re-knit, I will not join them in so foul a proceeding," said Hugh.

"I told them so—I understood your character too well, to doubt for a moment what your reply would be. I have wagered largely upon it, and have won my wager. They would however, make me put the question, and I am right glad that you have answered it as I anticipated. The storm will burst upon Pym's devoted head, but Giles Tudball will not be the man to add weight to its fall. For the present, Master Hugh, I bid thee farewell.

"Use your best endeavours to stay any hostile proceedings against Master Pym, and, if all other plans fail, apply to Colonel Wyndham. And now farewell," said Hugh.

Giles Tudball had not left his apartment many minutes, before Hugh de Mohun resolved to seek the colonel, and himself communicate to him the mischievous intentions of the Dunster men towards Pym. He was aware that Giles would feel it a breach of confidence on his part, if he betrayed the plan without the permission of those who had formed it. He proceeded to dress himself in a garb more suitable than the undress in which he had passed the morning, but, before he had concluded his toilette, a knock at the door of his apartment an-

nounced to him that some one sought admission.

"Enter," said Hugh, "whoever you be."

"It is I, Hugh," said Master Luttrell. "I am glad to see you have so far recovered from your illness and its consequent weakness, as to be able to resume a dress which more becometh you than the wrapping gown which hath been your garb of late."

"I was about to seek an interview with Colonel Wyndham on matters of deep import," said Hugh.

"I have come hither to lead you to his presence," said Master Luttrell. "Do you feel yourself strong enough to undertake a long journey on horseback?"

"I believe myself to be sufficiently restored to attempt it," said Hugh.

"It is well," said Master Luttrell, and, before we seek the colonel, let me explain to you as briefly as I may the plans I have laid down for your future proceedings."

Hugh bowed, and took a seat opposite to Master Luttrell, and to which he had pointed.

"I will but allude to the unforeseen circumstances under which you are left under my roof. I would not pain you, but it must be said. You are

at present without name or fortune—nay without the means of maintenance.”

Hugh de Mohun laid his head upon his hands, and groaned deeply.

“Grieve not, Hugh,” continued Master Luttrell; “a mystery hangs over you at present, which I believe will ere long be explained. Until it is explained, I intend to be your banker, and supply you with such means as will enable you to carry out those plans for your education and settlement in life, which I know that Master Snelling had designed for you.”

“I thank you, sir,” said Hugh; “from my heart I thank you, and doubt not to be able to repay you any sums you may kindly advance me. But what plans would you have me adopt?”

“Master Snelling had it in charge to educate you for the same profession, of which he was so worthy a member,” said Master Luttrell.

“The church?”

“The church; and for that purpose you have been prepared to enter at one of our universities. It was good Master Snelling’s wish that you should enter Merton College in Oxford, the dean of which

was his warmest friend. He is prepared to receive you, as this letter, which I have but lately received, will testify, and an opportunity now presents itself of your travelling thither in comfort and safety."

"I would rather," said Hugh, "obtain a commission in the king's army, and join his standard in the north."

"You are young as yet," said Master Luttrell; "a few years spent in completing your education, will not be thrown away, and, should this unseemly opposition to the king's wishes be converted into an open rebellion, as some persons affect to believe it will, you can exchange the student's cap for the soldier's helmet, and the gown of serge for the coat of mail. I will promise you not to thwart your wishes, although I should deem it the more prudent part, were you to seek rank in an establishment, which holds out to her favoured sons both power and emolument."

"I am all unsuited for a churchman," said Hugh: "I cannot submit to the dulness and monotony of the life of a country priest. But, I will most cheerfully and readily comply with your suggestion to perfect my education at Oxford, upon the under-

standing that I shall be allowed to quit the cloister for the camp, should an opportunity present itself to me of taking up arms in the defence of my lawful king."

"Assuredly, we will fight side by side in the good cause," said Master Luttrell.

"And when will it be needful for me to commence my career as a student in the university?" said Hugh.

"At once," said Master Luttrell; "apartments are provided for you in Merton College, and, although it is now vacation time, your tutor, Gilbert Dynes, is ready to receive you, and Doctor Brent, the custos or warden of the society, hath yielded to his request to receive you immediately."

"I am prepared to set out then," said Hugh; "but before I leave this neighbourhood for some years, it may be, I would pay a farewell visit to my kind friend Mistress Luttrell and to Prudence Everard."

"It may not be, Hugh," said Master Luttrell. "I said just now that an opportunity presented itself for your travelling to Oxford. A party is journeying thitherward, with one with whom you are

acquainted. I have just received permission to introduce you to the principal personage, in whom you will find no mean companion in your travels. Follow me."

Hugh de Mohun followed his friend, and was conducted to a room hung round with tapestry, which he had never before seen. Colonel Wyndham was there, conversing with a youth about eleven or twelve years of age, who seemed to pay but little attention to what was said to him, but to be engaged in playing with one of Master Luttrell's gazehounds, which had found its way into the apartment. A man stood before the boy, with his back towards Hugh and his friend. He turned round as they closed the door behind them, and Hugh was not a little surprised to see Dr. Aaron Graveboys before him.

He was about to offer him his hand, and salute him cordially, but the doctor put up his finger in a cautioning manner, and pointed to the boy.

"May it please your Royal Highness," said Master Luttrell bowing lowly, as he took Hugh by the hand and presented him, "this is Master Hugh de Mohun, of whom we spoke, as a fitting attendant upon you in your journey hence."

The boy looked up, and gazed at Hugh in a way that proved rather offensive. Hugh thought he had never seen a much uglier boy in his life, for he was of a swarthy complexion, wore an abundance of coarse black hair, and was of a most ungainly figure. As he was addressed under the title of his Royal Highness, Hugh imitated the example set him by Master Luttrell, and bowed, but not so deferentially.

"I like his looks," said the boy, turning to the colonel, "though by his cheeks, one might judge that he had had a slight touch of this same plague, that hath driven us from the good city of Bristol. Hath he been ailing?"

"Master Hugh de Mohun," said Wyndham, smiling at the bewildered looks with which the young man regarded the boy, "the Prince of Wales would know if you have been ailing of late."

Hugh bowed again, and was about to begin a set speech, but the boy stepped forward and offered him his hand. Hugh took it, and attempted to raise it to his lips.

"Tush, man, we are not to play the prince just now : our court consists only of the worthy Master Graveboys and his man Jansen. We are, it seems,

to be companions for some days, and as you are not to acknowledge my rank, it were as well to be upon terms of freedom at once. Do you love dogs?"

"Dearly, your Royal Highness—"

"There, now, Sir John, you have been boasting of Master Hugh de Mohun's prudence, and he at once proclaims me prince. You are to call me Master, Master—what was the name?—but heed it not; call me Charles," said the boy, "and now tell me, Hugh, is not this gazehound a perfect creature of its kind? Were it not out of the season, I would see him course a hare ere we quitted Dunster."

"It would gratify your Roy—"

The boy laughed again, and looked at Sir John.

"It would gratify you, Master Charles, he hath fleetness of foot equal to the best gazehound that ever was let slip," said Hugh.

"You will address the prince as Master Langley; the name of Charles might betray what we wish to conceal."

"I should like to rob you of this dog," said the prince, "he would be a pleasing companion in our journey."

"It must not be, Master Langley," said Grave-boys. "Our journey is to be accomplished by by-ways, and to have a gazehound with us, might subject us to many an inconvenience, if not danger."

"I should like to have the dog for all that," said the boy, "but as you say I must not take him, I will beg of Master Luttrell to let him be removed at once, lest I grow too fond of him to part with him hereafter. But no, let him stay with us while we eat our dinner. I am so fond of feeding dogs with my own hand."

The dog was allowed to remain, and, when the dinner was announced as ready prepared in the adjoining room, the prince took him with him, and seemed delighted to think that he preferred a seat by his side—forgetting that he was, without cessation, supplying him with the choicest morsels from his plate.

In spite of his attention to the dog, the prince ate voraciously, and would have probably subjected himself to a fit of indigestion, had not Grave-boys quietly but firmly forbidden him to eat any more.

"Well, well, I will obey you, sir; although I

confess that my long ride over these hills has given me an appetite that is as yet far from satisfied. The hound, you will be pleased to remember, hath eaten the greater share of my commons," replied the prince, as he eyed a roasted duck, lying in the dish before him.

"We must have a care to your health, Master Langley. You have a long journey before you, and, if you should fall ill on the way, it might prove as bad as the plague to you," said Grave-boys. "You may eat of those pippins and freely, for they are stewed and warmly spiced."

The boy seized the dish, and, as he crammed himself with the fruit and the juice, said: "It strikes me, doctor, that, although the plague was busy with its cruel work in the lower parts of the good city of Bristol, I should have been safe enough from its influence in the royal fort; nor should I have been dispatched thence in so much haste, had not some suspicion of disloyalty in the garrison found its way into the minds of certain parties, whom I need not name. The plague hath not caused me to exchange the title of Charles Stuart for that of Master—what is it?—or to ride about

the country through lanes and woods, and over unfrequented wastes, with a mediciner and his Merry-Andrew."

As he concluded this speech and his dish of pip-pins at the same time, he looked in the faces of the party with so cunning a smile, and his black eyes sparkled so brightly, that Hugh forgot the rank of the speaker, and burst out in a hearty laugh.

Colonel Wyndham and Master Luttrell looked at Hugh reprovingly.

"Nay, I pray thee, Sir John, look not chidingly upon Master Hugh. That laugh becomes him better than the sad looks he has hitherto worn, and, as we are to be companions on terms of equality, I wish him to know that I love mirth in a fellow-traveller. I would gladlier hear a thrilling laugh than a heart-oppressed sigh. When do we set out upon our journey hence, Master Graveboys?"

"With the morning's earliest dawn," replied the doctor, "and as Sir John Wyndham, Master Luttrell, and myself, have some measures to concert, we will leave with you, for your entertainment, Master Hugh de Mohun—"

"And the gazehound," said the prince.

For some two hours Hugh de Mohun was obliged to entertain the black boy, as he was called ; (a name, by the by, under which his health was often drunk by the Cavaliers previous to the restoration, and which is, even in these remote days, given as a sign to inns and taverns, especially in those parts of the country which were notorious for their loyalty and attachment to the Stuarts). The task however, was not one of great difficulty, as he seemed content to play with the hound, and to listen to such accounts as Hugh could give of his performances in the field.

After an early supper, the prince retired. Dr. Graveboys attended upon him, and, after he had seen him into bed, he joined Hugh de Mohun and insisted upon his seeking his night's rest as early as possible. Basil Chipera had already packed his scanty wardrobe, and it was not until he was about to fall into his first sleep, that Hugh recollected the news of the intended attack on Pym's house at Cutcombe, and his determination to give notice of it to Sir John Wyndham and Master Thomas Luttrell. He doubted not that the morning would afford him an opportunity of atoning for his forgetfulness.

CHAPTER X.

ON the following morning, before the day had dawned, Hugh was roused from his sleep by Jansen, who bade him hasten his preparations for departure, as Master Langley and the mediciner were ready to proceed on their journey.

Hugh was dressed in a few minutes, and left his apartment, fully expecting to see Master Luttrell or the colonel before he set out. In this he was disappointed. He found only Graveboys and the prince awaiting him, and had hardly time given him to exchange greetings with them, before he was conducted by Hamnet Hele, who was to attend upon them dressed as a groom, to the horses, which stood ready for being mounted

in the park, below the hill on which the Castle stands.

When all were mounted, with such portion of their luggage as was absolutely necessary for their journey, stowed away upon the horses ridden by Jansen and Hamnet Hele, Graveboys, taking his place in advance of the little party, rode briskly forward. The prince rode by the side of Hugh de Mohun, and amused him by his light-hearted chat, which, with the occasional stories of Hamnet Hele, of the adventures he had met with under Gustavus Adolphus, served to render the journey less tedious than it would otherwise have been.

As it will not be necessary to accompany the party on their travels, which were accomplished without any occurrence worthy of note, it will be sufficient to say that, keeping clear of all the main roads, they were conducted by Graveboys over a trackless district, leaving Bridgewater and Glastonbury on their left. They passed near to Frome, and then near to the Devizes and Marlborough which were on their right. Thence over a wild down-country, through the ancient towns of Lambourne, Wantage, and Abingdon, to Oxford.

Two things only struck Hugh de Mohun as strange in the proceedings of the party. They never halted for refreshment or rest at any house of public entertainment; but, after having ridden the day's distance, came to some private mansion, where they were hospitably received and lodged, without knowing to whom they were indebted for their rest and refreshment, or seeing any body belonging to the places at which they halted. This was one of the things that appeared strange to Hugh. The other was, that Jansen, who always waited on the prince and himself whenever they halted, was so taciturn, that it was impossible to learn anything from him. Of Hamnet Hele they saw nothing, after they had arrived at their halting places, until they mounted their horses on the following morning, and from him they could learn nothing as to the names of the mansions wherein they had rested, or of the persons to whom they belonged. Graveboys too was invisible during their stay, and was as uncommunicative as Hamnet Hele, although the prince sometimes pressed hardly upon him for information.

On the evening of the fourth day, they reached

Oxford. Their horses were left at a small hostelry near to Christ Church, which was called the Blue Boar. Hamnet Hele and Jansen were left in charge of them, and the prince and Hugh de Mohun were conducted by Graveboys along the Blue-Boar lane and by Oriel and Corpus Christi Colleges to Merton.

"I will, with your permission, Master Langley," said Graveboys, "place Hugh de Mohun under the care of Master Gilbert Dynes, who will speedily arrange matters for his taking possession of the apartments assigned to him, and will then return to you, and consign you to the care of the custos of the College, Dr. Brent. I beg of you to await my return under this archway."

"Am I to see Master Hugh again?" said the prince.

"Of that I am uncertain; it will depend on the nature of certain letters and orders which I expect to meet with here," said Graveboys.

"Then, fearing the worst, that we must part for a time, I will take my leave of him now, thanking him in all sincerity for his kindness to me, and

the comfort which his company hath afforded me," said the prince.

He held out his hand, and Hugh raised it to his lips.

"Enough; Master Langley may one day or another be a king. He will not forget the companion of his travels, and he only regrets that he has to leave him to study from musty parchments in the walls of this gloomy place, instead of taking him with him to the camp of his father, where he might play a prominent part in the busy scenes about to be enacted."

"I thank you from my heart," said Hugh, "and rely upon it, should a war be found unavoidable, I shall be seen fighting in the ranks of the king's friends. I have Master Luttrell's promise to that effect."

"Enough," said Graveboys; "now Master Hugh do you follow me: and do you, Master Langley, await me for a few moments beneath this archway, where I will speedily join you."

The prince again held out his hand to Hugh, who having held it for a moment, dropped it and followed Graveboys to a staircase on the right of

the outer quadrangle. He mounted some dozen steps, and, having knocked at a door at the top of them, was ordered to come in.

“ Master Gilbert Dynes, receive from my hands the pupil of your friend and fellow-student, Robert Snelling. In Hugh de Mohun you will find one worthy of your regard, and of the pains you may bestow upon his education. This packet is from Master Luttrell of Dunster Castle ; it contains a certain sum, to be by you laid out on whatever you deem needful for your pupil's necessities. When it is exhausted, you are to acquaint Master Luttrell of the fact, and he will send a fresh supply. I must now bid you adieu ; I have matters of importance to attend to. Hugh de Mohun, for the present, farewell ; forget not the good cause, and above all remember the diamond cross. I will see you again ere long—let Master Langley be forgotten.”

Hugh de Mohun listened to these words, which were whispered into his ear, and bowed obedience. He listened too to the descending footsteps of Graveboys, and, when they had ceased to sound in his ears, he turned to take a closer survey of his new friend and tutor.

Gilbert Dynes had already seen his fiftieth year : of the half century that he had lived, three fourths had been spent in study. He was not only deeply read in the classics and mathematics, but had made himself master of many of the modern languages, and had lately occupied himself in experimental philosophy. Of the world—the outer world—he knew but little. Politics had no charms for him; polemics were not to his taste; he had been bred up as a churchman, and he lived and acted consistently with what he firmly believed to be the spirit of the articles and canons of the church, as by law established. In person he was tall and thin; his face was pale, and his hair, which had been black, was now thickly mingled with grey. He was dressed in the academical habit of the day; a closely fitting suit of sad-coloured cloth, with a falling collar of pure white muslin round his throat, and on his head the square cap which had been introduced by Laud but a few years before. His gown, denoting the degree of a Master of Arts, was lying over the back of the high, handsomely carved oaken chair on which he was sitting.

The rooms which he occupied were panelled

with dark oak. The floor, which was of the same material, was highly polished, and uncovered, except for a few yards near to where he sat; there a few rushes had been strewn. The fire-place was without any grate, and a pair of polished irons, with brass mountings imitating the faces of dogs, showed that, in the cold season, wood was the fuel he consumed.

A heavy oak table and some dozen chairs were the whole of his furniture, excepting a large set of book-shelves well filled, which occupied the whole of one side of the apartment. The windows were latticed, and without shutters or curtains. A brass lamp, supplied with oil, and giving but a scanty light, stood on the table near him, and on the book out of which he had been studying, rested a huge pair of spectacles, set in common horn mountings.

"Hugh de Mohun," said Gilbert Dynes, in a soft musical voice, "as the pupil of my friend and fellow-student, Robert Snelling, whom God in his mercy hath removed, I bid thee welcome."

Hugh took the hand which was extended to him, and pressed it, as he looked in the speaker's face, and saw the tears trickle down his cheeks.

"Your character is well known to me; neither am I ignorant of the nature and extent of your studies. The good work begun by my friend, it shall be mine office to finish: but we will not talk of such matters to-night. Your journey must have fatigued you; I will procure some refreshment, and show you the apartments you are to occupy, which are nigh to my own."

Hugh declined taking any refreshment, stating that he did not need it, as they had stopped at a mansion near the town of Abingdon, and supped before they had reached Oxford.

"I will, then, precede you to your rooms at once, that you may seek the rest of which you stand in need. As it is not yet nine o'clock, and high summer, you will not need a light for the mere purpose of disrobing; so follow me."

Hugh obeyed. Gilbert Dynes descended his own staircase, and turned into the next archway, where he opened a door and introduced Hugh into a small room on the ground-floor. It was furnished with a table and a couple of high-backed chairs, and against one of the walls was placed an empty set of shelves for books.

"This," said Gilbert, "is your sitting-room, open yon door in the wainscot, and it will admit you to your sleeping apartment."

Hugh did as he had been bidden. The open door disclosed to him a small closet in which were a truckle bedstead, one rush-covered chair, and a table, upon which were some articles for the purpose of ablution, composed of coarse ware.

"I will now wish you a good night," said Gilbert, "your attendant, who also waits upon me, will bring you your valise in the morning. We usually rise at five, but, as it is vacation-time and the chapel is closed, you can repose until six o'clock, at which hour we break our fast."

Hugh de Mohun, when left alone by his tutor in his rooms, felt that depressing sensation which always attends upon a person who finds himself in a strange place and amidst strange people.

"I would," said he, "that I had held out against the proposals, kind though they be, of Master Luttrell, and joined the army at once. After breathing the free air of Somerset on her hills, and quaffing her cheering gales from the Channel, I never can submit to be choked here in this place,

which acts upon my lungs like the breathing of the atmosphere of a charnel-house. I will not undress, for I cannot sleep—faugh ! I shall be suffocated.”

Hugh threw open the little lattice window of his bed-closet. The air of a warm summer's night came heated and felt oppressive to his feverish brow. He recollected that a pitcher of water formed a part of the preparations made for his reception, and, having filled his basin with its contents, he laved his forehead in it. The experiment proved successful, for the air admitted by the open window caused a rapid evaporation, which acted like an application of ice upon his heated brain.

“An the silence were not so intense, I might endure this,” said he; “but I seem as though I were enclosed in a dungeon, and shut out from all the sounds which—”

Bom—bom—bom—

“Heavens ! what meaneth this ?” said Hugh, as the deep tones of a most musical bell were heard booming as loudly as a piece of artillery through the air. He could not refrain from listening to the notes, although they well-nigh distracted him ; nor could he help counting the strokes as they reached

him painfully and distinctly. Suddenly the bell ceased.

"One hundred and one," said Hugh, "one hundred and one—what can it mean? but I will close my casement and seek sleep."

He undressed himself, and, though his bed was harder and his linen coarser than any he had hitherto met with, he was soon entirely oblivious of all that had passed, and in as sound a sleep as ever visited the eyes of a weary man.

He seemed to have slept but a short hour, when a hand was laid on his shoulder. He turned on his couch, and without opening his eyes muttered the name of Basil Chipera, adding a request that he would not disturb him.

"Who Basil Chipera may be, I know not—rouse thee, Hugh de Mohun, for a brief moment."

Hugh roused himself, and, opening his eyes, saw the prince standing by the side of his truckle-bed; he would have risen on the instant, but the boy, placing his hand on his shoulder, held him down.

"Lie still, and hear what I have to say. I am about to leave Oxford this moment, to join

my father, the King, in the north; but I would not quit this, in spite of Master Graveboys' orders to the contrary, without bidding you beware of the custos of this place—Doctor Brent; I like not his looks: there is a puritanical air about him that savours of disaffection. Be on your guard when in his presence, and let him not know that, under the guise of Master Langley, he hath received the son of his liege master. Once more, Hugh de Mohun, I bid thee farewell, hoping to meet thee under more favourable auspices. And, should you return to Dunster before we meet, secure me, if you can, the gaze-hound which took my affections so readily—farewell."

Before Hugh could answer, the prince was gone, and in a few seconds he was as sound asleep again as though his slumbers had not been interrupted.

He was not permitted to enjoy his rest long, however. The attendant, whom Gilbert Dynes had ordered to procure the valise and whatever else he had travelled with, came to rouse him.

"Will it please you to arise, sir? The dean is prepared to break his fast," said Perkin, or Peter-

kin Doyle, the scout, as such college servants are called. "If you need assistance in resuming your clothes I can afford to render it, seeing that it is vacation-time, and that my duties are light: at the same time, unless you purpose keeping a body-servant for your own especial purposes, I would advise you to learn to dress without assistance, as, when term sets in, and we are full, you will stand but little chance of obtaining it."

"I can dispense with your services, as I have ever been taught to rely on my own resources, even in mightier matters than donning a student's suit of black cloth. But, before you leave me, I would inquire the meaning of the tolling of a weighty bell, which caused me no slight alarm last night."

"You will hear the same sound at the same hour every night," said Perkin Doyle. "Great Tom of Oxford is tolled nightly; some hundred and one strokes of its weighty clapper summon the students of the college, called Christ's Church, within its walls, and other students also. It is suspended within the campanile of the cathedral, the spire of which you might see from your chamber window

but for the buildings of our neighbours of Corpus Christi which intervene."

Perkin Doyle vanished after he had thus satisfactorily explained to the fresh student the cause of his fears. Hugh was speedily dressed in the mourning suit which he had worn since the death of his friend and tutor, and sought the apartment of him who was now to supply his place.

"Fall to—fall to, Master Hugh, we are late; the day will be well-nigh spent ere we can commence our studies. Here be small loaves, called Brown Georges, after the name of their inventor; and here be eggs, and, for meat, some salted pig-meat smoked over a wood fire, for which we are celebrated in Oxford, and cold dried salmon supplied from the Severn; cheese and stewed pears must make up your meal, and for drink there be sound college ale, and as it may sit cold on a stomach hitherto unused to it, I have ordered Perkin Doyle to set on a supply of the *Vinum creticum*—wine made from the raisin or dried grape, with a due proportion of spices, which you may add, according to your taste," said Gilbert Dynes.

Hugh de Mohun, who had gone to bed on the

night previous without his supper, and was very hungry, fell to with an appetite which surprised as much as it delighted his new tutor, who, as he watched the inroads made upon the viands before him, almost forgot to secure his share of them.

“And now that our meal is over,” said Gilbert Dynes, “we will sally forth, and, passing through our postern-gate, which putteth us at once without the walls of the city, we will stroll for our health’s sake in the meadows which abut upon the stream called by some the Isis, by others the Thames; but which, as I argue, ought to bear the appellation of Thamesis, seeing that the junction of the Isis and the Thames is effected not far below.

Hugh, as he passed under the archway in the southern wall of the city, and found himself in the meadows now known as Merton fields, and Christ Church meadow, thought that even in Somersetshire he had never seen a more beautiful prospect. The ground in front was flat, it was true, but behind it were the sloping woods of Bagley, thoroughly enveloped in thin dark green foliage; the

tower of the ancient church of Iffley was on a hill to the left. The lofty and pinnacled tower of Magdalen College impended over the clear stream of the Cherwell. He saw the church of St. John Baptist, used by the Merton men as their chapel ; and the buildings of Corpus Christi, over which was seen the sturdy spire of the cathedral of the diocese. Before him was spread the broad bosom of the Isis, on whose surface, even at that early hour, barges and pleasure-boats were gliding.

“ Beautiful indeed !” said Hugh, “ but I prithee tell me, what is that strangely shaped building near yon bridge to our right ? I passed it as we entered the town yesterday, but had not opportunity to question my companions on the subject.”

“ That,” said the dean, “ is the study of Friar Bacon, of whom you have doubtless heard ; but we will hasten to take our exercise, that we may be in readiness to pay our respects to the warden, who I trust will be able, at my earnest entreaty, to give you a place in one of our foundations, for we have a *collegium in collegio* as it were, and nominate you a postmaster or *scholaris post magistrum*. It will to a certain extent afford you the

means of self-support, and thus lighten the expense of your maintenance and education so liberally undertaken by Master Luttrell.

Hugh de Mohun expressed himself as warmly as he felt, and, having walked the distance which his tutor deemed essential to health, returned with him through the postern-gate into Merton, and accompanied him to the lodgings of the warden, by whom he was graciously received, and appointed to a vacant postmastership.

After the necessary forms had been passed, the warden entered into conversation with the dean, and put a few questions to Hugh de Mohun as to the progress he had made in his studies. When he thought that he was sufficiently at his ease, he asked him in a sudden way, and as if he cared not what his reply might be, "whether he knew the real name of the youth who had been accommodated in his lodgings on the previous night, under the name of Master Langley."

"I do," said Hugh, reluctantly; "I do. I will not tell a falsehood: I know him, but I am not at liberty to disclose his name."

"You do right not to betray the confidence re-

posed in you. I bid you farewell, and commend you to the judicious care of our dean."

Hugh de Mohun bowed reverentially to the warden, but could not help feeling, as he saw his eyes coldly fixed upon him, that he had incurred his displeasure by concealing from him the true name and character of Master Langley.

He looked up into the face of his companion, to see if he could read there any confirmation of his suspicions, but Gilbert Dynes had not observed what had passed, and was deep in the mysteries of some problem in chemistry, which he was working out in his own mind.

The remainder of the day was spent in procuring such things as were deemed needful for his comfort by Perkin Doyle, and in purchasing such books as the dean, his tutor, considered essential for the course of reading which he had marked out for him.

CHAPTER XI.

WE must leave Hugh de Mohun for a time, busily employed in preparing to commence a course of reading with his new tutor, and return to Somersetshire, where events took place, the day after the departure of Graveboys and the prince, which materially affected the future career of some of the characters to whom the reader has been introduced.

It will be recollected that Giles Tudball sought an interview with Hugh de Mohun, and mentioned to him the wish of certain of the idle troopers and men of Dunster, that he should place himself at their head, and lead them on to attack Master Pym and his forces, assembled at his residence at Cutcombe.

When Giles returned to the hostelry known as the Luttrell Arms, in Dunster, he freely and frankly told those who were there assembled, and had deputed him to deliver their message, that he was glad to say he had found Hugh de Mohun unchanged in courtesy and kindness, and unwilling to take any share, much less a prominent part, in a cowardly attack upon Master Pym.

"It is as I thought," said Alloway of Minehead, who was nearly intoxicated; "he is a rank coward: under the plea of illness he hath insulted Master Julian Bachell, and refused to meet him in the way which gentlemen fail not to do under such circumstances."

"It is false, butcher," said Giles; "had Master Julian ought to say to Hugh de Mohun's hurt, he ought to have said it openly before him, within the precincts of the Castle, which he hath not quitted."

"It is a lie, and I will maintain it against all the Tudballs that ever lived," said Alloway; "Hugh de Mohun is a coward, and so I ever found him."

"Not when he so freely gave thee a chance of recovering thy lost honour on the stage at Culbone,"

said Giles; "I will not taunt thee, however, with thy defeats, for thou art beside thyself with over much drinking."

"It is a lie," said Alloway, suddenly springing to his feet and rushing on Giles, "a wilful lie, and I will thrust it down thy throat."

The butcher struck at Giles as he spoke these words, but he coolly stepped aside, and his adversary, missing his blow, fell heavily to the ground, where the host and some of the company held him, to prevent his farther insulting Giles Tudball.

"Come, Master Bowering, come with me," said Giles, beckoning to his mate; "thou art parcel-drunk already, or you would not sit there, and allow your master to be attacked thus, without stepping forth in his defence."

"Master? master? master, quoth he?" replied Will, hiccupping, "I love not the term: I am mine own master—none can gainsay me."

"Save thy wife, who will let thee know if thou hast not a master in your mistress, when you stagger home to her stores," said Giles.

"I shall give her no opportunity for this eve however. I like my company, Master Tudball, and

here I shall stay until I am tired of it; you may take my resolve as it best pleaseth you."

Giles smiled, and bade the host send Will safely to Minehead, as soon as he was in a fit state to be moved, for fear a merman should meet him on the road, and deprive him of the few senses the liquor had left him, or Mistress Leckey, the grey woman of Minyeard, pinch him black and blue.

The very mention of the grey woman almost sobered the superstitious fool. He rose from the ground, and, staggering forward, offered to accompany his master at once. Giles, however, declined his company, and, leaving the room suddenly, sought the stables, mounted the roan horse, that had once called Roger Priver master, and rode by the meadows to Minehead. At his home he found Quirke waiting for him, with a letter which had been forwarded for him, by a messenger despatched from Bridgewater by Aaron Graveboys, and which ought to have been delivered to him some hours before.

Giles read the letter, and handed it to Robert Quirke. It contained an order for Giles to set sail on the receipt of it, and make for Lundy Island,

to intercept a Dutch vessel, which was bringing money and ammunition to Bristol from the queen; and to pilot her into the port of Minehead, as doubts were entertained of the loyalty of the governor of the royal fort of Bristol: an enclosed note, he was told, would be a sufficient warrant for the Dutchman to obey his orders.

"I would willingly obey the order," said Giles, "but where my crew are to be found I know not. I have just left my mate Will, in a useless state from the liquor he hath drunk, and this is an affair that will not admit of delay."

"I can offer a suggestion, Master Tudball, which will remove all difficulties. The Saint David is at the quay. Take honest Master Jenkins and his crew on board the Blossom of Minehead and up anchor at once; tide and wind both serve for making Lundy without a single tack."

"Can'st not go thyself," Master Quirke? said Dame Tudball. "Why should my good man—God pardon me for falsely calling him so!—why should Giles be ever sent away from his home on every fool's errand, when Master Quirke, who

hath no wife to comfort him or be comforted by him, plays the lag-behind."

"Pish, woman! it is an affair of state," said Giles.

"Which will bring thee more cracked crowns than golden ones—but go thy ways," said Dame Tudball.

"I would go dame and willingly, had I not enough and more than enough to do, to keep quiet amongst the troopers garrisoned in my new build-ings, who seem to think that all an idle soldier hath to do is to smoke, and drink, and to make love to every girl who passeth."

"It serveth you right, why should you harbour a set of—"

"Come, come Master Quirke, an you stay and listen to all my dame hath to say, it will be morn again ere the lug-sails of the Blossom of Minehead be set," said Giles, as he led Master Quirke away.

So busy was Giles in preparing to execute the duty assigned to him by the mediciner, and in getting his lugger under weigh, that he forgot to tell Master Quirke of his fears of an attack being made upon Master Pym, at Cutcombe, by the

drunken troopers at Dunster. Master Jenkins and his mate were found at their old quarters, the Ship Aground, and made no objections to accompany him to Lundy. Old Master Luckes, as harbour-master, staggered down to the pier, and made believe to examine the instructions which were shewn him, to account for the sudden departure of the Blossom of Minehead ; but being too far overcome with the contents of his son's cellar and spirit stores, staggered back again, and took his seat beside the window.

When he had seen Giles Tudball fairly afloat and his sails set, Robert Quirke left the lower town, and walked up the causeway to see how matters were going on at his almshouses. All was quiet enough when he arrived there, for not a soldier was to be seen. Upon inquiring of some neighbours the cause of the desertion of the garrison, he was told that a messenger had arrived from Dunster not more than a quarter of an hour before, to summon the men over there upon some special matter.

"Special indeed," said Quirke, "a game of bowls, or quaits, or cards, or a drinking-match. Well,

let them go for all I care, I will not wait their return ; should my presence be needed I shall be found at Richard Luckes'."

In the afternoon of the day following these events, and early in the morning of which Hugh de Mohun and the prince had set out from the Castle, Julian Bachell was riding home at a rapid pace from Luxborough. His brow was contracted, his face deeply flushed, and the bright rays of anger and vexation gleamed from his eyes. He seemed to have been venting his spleen upon his horse, for its brilliant hide was covered with dust and foam, and its flanks bore bloody traces of the spur.

He had ridden over to Luxborough, contrary to the wishes and advice of his father, to whom he had revealed the rejection of his suit by Prudence Everard, to seek another interview with her, and urge for her consideration many matters which had suggested themselves to him since their last meeting. So strong and powerful did the points and arguments he meant to urge and set before her appear to him, that a hope of eventual success filled his bosom, and made him feel happier than he had

done for some time past. The idea too, of triumphing over Hugh de Mohun, whom he now detested as heartily as he had before loved him, raised his spirits to an unwonted height.

When he arrived at Colonel Wyndham's, he gave his horse to one of the tenants, who was keeping guard near the house, and walked to the window of the room in which he had conversed with Prudence when last they met. He entered the room, but it was unoccupied : an unfinished picture on an easel, the palette and brushes lying by its side, and a seat placed before it, were proofs to him that she had been recently engaged in her favourite pursuit.

He summoned a servant, and bade her acquaint Mistress Everard that he was arrived, and wished to speak with her on matters of moment. The maid returned in a few minutes to say, that "Mistress Everard was indisposed, and must decline seeing him. If he had any message of consequence to deliver, her guardian would receive it, and convey it to her."

Julian bit his lip ; but, suppressing some angry words which he was on the point of uttering, he

as calmly as he could, inquired for lady Wyndham and Mistress Luttrell. They were not within, the girl said, but had ridden, as she believed, towards Dunster, with Master Luttrell and Sir John.

Julian at first resolved to await their return, and use his best endeavours to induce Mistress Luttrell to become his advocate with Prudence, but the knowledge that she favoured the suit of Hugh deterred him. He found writing materials on one of the tables, and wrote a note, earnestly entreating Prudence to see him but for a few moments. The reply was returned with the note, unopened, that Mistress Everard could receive no communication from Master Julian Bachell, unless through her guardian.

Julian flung his hat upon his head, seized the bridle of his horse, and snatched it from the hand of the man who held it. Muttering a deep curse on Prudence, and a vow of vengeance against Hugh de Mohun, he struck the rowels of his spurs deep into the sides of his steed, and galloped back on his way home.

He had arrived at the foot of the steep ascent

which leads from Porlock-wear to Ashley-Combe, before he pulled up his panting and exhausted horse. He was about to turn from the village up the hill to the Lodge, when his progress was arrested by a loud voice calling him by name. He looked in the direction whence the voice came, and saw a man in a sailor's dress, waving his cap to him, at the door of the little inn which bore the sign of the Blue Anchor, and was the house wherein Hugh had taken his morning meal on the day of the revels at Culbone.

"What would the fool, that he bellows thus lustily?" said Julian, as he made his horse fast to a gate, and crossed a meadow which afforded him access by a short but steep path to the rear of the inn. As soon as he had reached the garden gate, he was met by the person who had hailed him, and by Alloway, who, like his companion, had evidently been indulging in the good things afforded by the cellars of the Blue Anchor.

"Why how is this?" said Julian; "What brings you to Porlock-wear, Will Bowering?"

"Master Jenkins' small boat and be hang'd to it, seeing that she required to be rowed all the

way, instead of sailing as she ought to have done, and given me time to enjoy a pipe," said Will.

"Wind and tide were against her—she is a good boat, Will, but wind and tide, you know—wind and tide," stammered Alloway, looking very wise.

"Silence, fool!—thou art drunk, and canst scarce speak distinctly. Let Will, who seems besotted likewise, tell me for what purpose he hath delayed me on my way home."

"Fool!—quoth he—drunk too? may I be—"

"Hold on, butcher, let me explain to Master Julian the purpose of our coming hither," said Will Bowering; "'twere best not said in public, lest those should hear it that might report upon it, and so thwart our plans."

"We are private enough here," said Julian, "speak and to the purpose, for I am not in a humour to be trifled with."

Will saw that in the young man's face which fully convinced him of the truth of the remark. He therefore rallied his faculties, and told him as briefly as he could, that a plan had been formed by some of the troopers and the Minehead and Dunster men, to set out at night and attack Master Pym

in his mansion. Their design was, he said, to secure his person, and so rid the country of the alarm they were now in of an attack from him; and thus allow the tenantry to return to their work on their farms.

"That's it, Master Julian," said Alloway, "we are all ready and willing, and only want a leader; for Master Luttrell and the colonel must know nought of the matter until it is over, and Pym is in our hands."

"We are come over, unbeknown, as it were, and deputed by our friends to ask of you to lead us on," said Will: "both honour and glory are to be gotten in the attempt; for King Charles, God bless him, will not fail to knight the captain that places the bitterest of his enemies in his hands."

"But why seek me for a leader, when there is the young Hugh de Mohun at Dunster, who has been ever ready to lead you in your freaks?" said Julian.

"Curse him!" said Alloway, "he is a coward, and false to boot."

"He hath declined the matter," said Will, "and moreover, read my captain, Giles Tudball, a lecture

such as only a love-sick puritan could read to an honest man, on the impropriety of—what was it, butcher?"

"Never mind," said Julian.

"He hath not been worth the value of a thow-pin, since he hath been the accepted sweetheart of the pretty wench whom he dragged out of the Hone river, as a water-dog would a wounded wild-duck," said Alloway.

Julian looked as if he would have knocked the speaker down; but he merely said, that Master Hugh's illness was a fair excuse for declining to take an active part, at present, in any matter where great fatigue and some danger were to be incurred.

"You will be our captain, then?" said Will.

"I will consult my father, and if he consent—"

"No, no, sir—an you ask him, he will propose a council with Sir John and Master Luttrell, and then our scheme will come to an end," said Will.

"Where is Giles Tudball, and why is not he, who was ever in the van of every rash frolic, here in person to solicit me?" said Julian.

"Where he is gone to, I know not. He sailed off

yestere'en without consulting me. Master Quirke who knoweth the object of his voyage, is in the grumps, because forsooth, his troop as he calls them, came not home from Dunster last night, but preferred enjoying the company of us jolly boys, at the Luttrell Arms, to spending the night in his scantily furnished alms-houses."

In the humour Julian was, the wild scheme of these reckless men appeared not only feasible but chivalric. If it were successful, he should doubtless be applauded by his sovereign, for putting into his power one who had been so daringly opposed to him. Rank in the army would follow, as a matter of reward, and might open the way to the highest honours, and place him near the king's person. If it failed, the attempt deserved some thanks, and would bring him into public notice. Then the glorious notion that he had undertaken what Hugh de Mohun had refused to undertake, was, he thought, a great triumph over him, whom he now deemed his enemy.

"I must hear more of your plans before I yield my assent," said he. "Come with me to Ashley-Combe, and we will talk the matter over in private."

“ Ay, and try whether the cellars be as famed as ever they were, for—”

“ No, Master Alloway,” said Julian, “ you have had enough, and I engage in no act requiring prudence and judgment with men who are not sober: you will see no more of Ashley-Combe than the gate-lodge of Master Hodge. When Pym is in our hands, and safely lodged in the custody of his majesty’s forces, then we will drink, and deeply too, to his speedy decapitation—follow, sirs.”

In somewhat less than a hour after their meeting in the garden of the Blue Anchor, Julian and his new allies separated. Will Bowering and Alloway, without taking anything at the inn, sought their boat, and, wind and tide being in their favour, were not long in gaining the port of Minehead, and thence with some of their friends, the Luttrell Arms in Dunster.

Julian Bachell, to his father’s question “ how had he sped with Prudence Everard ? ” calmly replied that she was unwell, and unable to see him. He also said that as he had not been fortunate enough to meet with Mistress Luttrell at Luxborough, he should ride over to Dunster, and if his father had

no objection, should sleep in the Castle, and return home in the morning.

“By all means,” said Master Bachell. “There does not appear to me to be any chance of an attack being made upon Ashley-Combe. Pym, they say, hath experienced more difficulty than he dreamed of, in procuring troops from the Parliament. It seems that all their views are directed to the assembling a force, meet to check that of the King, under whose standard the best and bravest in the land are daily rallying. It were but proper too, that you showed somewhat of your former kindness to Hugh de Mohun, who being scarcely yet convalescent, must feel himself dull within Dunster’s walls: though rivals in love, you need not be enemies.”

Julian did not reply to this unpleasant remark, but, informing his father that he should take his supper with him, and ride over to Dunster in the cool of the day, left him to give instructions to Alick Pearson, to be ready to accompany him at nightfall, to the Castle, and to prepare arms for both, in case of an attack on their way.

He did not confide to Alick the true reason for

their being effectively armed, for, although he had a perfect reliance on his fidelity, he thought that his powers of keeping a secret might be sorely tried by Janet, who, had she had the slightest intimation given her of the dangers with which her betrothed and her foster-brother were threatened, would assuredly, and without any hesitation, have betrayed the scheme to Master Bachell.

Alick Pearson, fondly believing that he was merely about to attend upon his young master to spend a night in Dunster, kissed Janet, and bade her be of good cheer until he saw her again in the morning.

Julian bade his father farewell, and mounted his horse just as the evening had closed, and a midsummer's night, if night it might be called, had commenced.

CHAPTER XII.

WE must again change the scene.

The shades of a lovely summer's evening were beginning to fall, as Master Pym sat in the library of his house at Cutcombe. He was reclining on a large, oaken, high-backed chair, which was so placed, as to command a view, through the opened lattices, of a lovely Combe, or narrow valley between two high wooded banks. At his side sat Mistress Pym, but just recovered from a long illness, and bearing the marks of it still in her beautiful countenance. At his feet, on a low stool, and resting her head upon her father's knee, sat his eldest daughter, a fair girl, who had but just seen her eighteenth summer; by her side stood her brother, a youth about fourteen years of age.

"Agatha, my child," said Pym, "your gaze is fixed on this lovely scene: is it not lovely?"

"Very, dearest father," said the girl.

"Gaze on it, my child, until its minutest beauties be marked on the tablet of your memory, for it may be, that years will intervene ere you view it again."

"How mean you, sir?" asked Mistress Pym.

"I have resolved to quit this calm and peaceful spot for a while, and to take you, dearest, and my children with me."

"Why so, father? I thought you but waited for forces and artillery, to punish the malignants below there," said the boy, pointing in the direction of Dunster and Ashley-Combe, "for the affronts they had put upon you."

"Such was my feeling, and, had the parliament attended to my requests, ere now, blood had been shed, in spite of your mother's entreaties that I would leave it to the Lord, to whom vengeance belongeth, to repay the insults heaped upon me," said Pym.

"I cannot but thank the parliament that hath, by its delaying to send forces, however such de-

lay may have proved offensive to you, prevented strife and slaughter amongst those, who have long been neighbours and ought to be friends," said Mistress Pym.

"I am not altogether displeased that affairs in this immediate neighbourhood have terminated thus amicably," said Pym. "There is a strong feeling manifested in the West towards the reigning dynasty; and, had I made my projected attack upon Dunster and Ashley-Combe, I might have been the cause of much bloodshed without profit to the great cause to which I am bound. I will escape the temptation, great as it is, to avenge my recent ill-usage, by retiring from this quarter and taking my family with me. A time may, nay will, come, and shortly too, when I may achieve a bloodless victory over those whom I must reckon among the number of my enemies. To-morrow we leave Cutcombe, this peaceful home, in which we have spent many happy hours, and travel towards London, where I have matters of importance to attend to."

"Thou art marvellously changed, father," said the boy; "for after the Lord Strafford's decapitation—"

"Silence, sir! at your early age it ill becomes you to interfere with matters you cannot understand," said Pym, in so stern a voice, that his wife looked up into his face, as if to ask the meaning of his harshness.

"At what hour do we set out?" said Agatha.

"At early dawn, my child; we must not make a parade of our journey, lest our enemies suppose that we flee from them. We shall leave the militia, who have hitherto been our guards here, and set out as though upon a visit to our neighbours," replied Pym.

"Which, to my poor thinking, looks very much like slinking away," said the boy, "something like that which I have seen the hare do before Sir John Wyndham's beagle hounds."

"I would not have our departure known, for reasons which your early years cannot well comprehend. To bed, sir, that you may be prepared to set out with us in the morning," said Pym.

The boy kissed his parents and his sister before he quitted the room, but, as he clasped his arms round his father's neck, he whispered in his ear a request that his favourite pony might

be his companion—a request that was readily granted.

“And now that the wilful boy hath left us, let me tell you my plans,” said Pym. “I have invited one or two of my tenants, on whom, since the cruel murder of Mauworth, I place my chief reliance, to come up here this night, to receive my instructions as to the proceedings of the troops whom I shall leave in the occupation of this our house: they will be here anon. I would have you make all the preparations you deem necessary for your travels, while I am engaged with them in the hall, where the troopers are already assembled. You need only provide sufficient apparel to enable you to reach the city of Bath, whither, passing by the disaffected town of Bridgewater and the infected city of Bristol, we shall travel; and where we shall meet with friends who will readily supply all our wants until our packages arrive.”

“We will prepare at once for our somewhat hasty departure, and will say good night, only entreating you not to spend too much of the night with your friends, and so deprive yourself of rest,

of which you may stand in need," said Mistress Pym.

"Good night, and may God bless you, my child," said Pym, kissing Agatha's brow. "May your sleep be undisturbed, as the sleep of the innocent ever is!"

"There be two would speak with you," said a servant, in a voice which came gratingly on the ear of Pym, as he sat thinking upon the wife of his bosom, and of their daughter who had just quitted him.

"Who are they? have they no names, sir?"

"An they have, they are not willing to make them known," said the man.

"Are they strangers?" asked Pym.

"To me they are, but they seem well enough known to the dogs, who, instead of barking, as is their wont at strangers, are fondling and playing about them—"

"Go ask their names, and why they seek me at this late and unseemly hour—but stay—what dresses wear they?"

"A mixture, as it were, of the clothing of the seaman, the soldier, and the gospel-preacher; the one is tall, and hath jaws shapen like a hatchet;

the other is short, and looketh as if a meal of solid food and his stomach had been long strangers," said the man laughing.

"Go question them, sirrah, as to their business, and their names, and indulge not in unseemly mirth," said Pym.

"It needeth not inquiry, good Master Pym," said Roger Priver, stalking into the room; "behold the lieutenant of your household forces, and Master Robert Browne, your household's chaplain."

Pym looked round, and could not help smiling, as by the dim light of the summer's eve, he saw the strangely apparelled pair before him.

"How now? what means this mumming, and why have you been absent thus long?" inquired he.

"How long? how long? how—"

"Nay, preach not now, Master Preacher, but let me expound to Master Pym, how our enemies entrapped us, and how we escaped from the snare of the fowler," said Roger Priver.

"Be brief, then," said Pym, "for I have matters of importance to attend to."

"Thou hast one of more importance than thou wottest of," said Browne.

"Silence, preacher, and let me expound in order," said Roger.

He then put himself in a proper oratorical attitude, and entered upon a long story of the drugged liquors that he had been compelled to drink at the Luttrell Arms; and how he had been conveyed against his will by Jenkins to Cardiff, and there shut up in a back room where he was well-nigh suffocated with the smell of cheese and leeks—

"Ay, and poisoned with the breath of a pestiferous he-goat," said Browne.

"Silence, preacher, let me expound," said Roger, and he continued his story, in which it was shown how he had escaped during the absence of Jenkins, and how he had tied Mistress Jenkins to the bed-post, and how, having borrowed some seaman's clothing and certain gold and silver coins, he had bribed a poor fisherman to convey them across the Channel to the town of Minehead, whence they had made their way on foot.

"And now it is my turn to speak," said Browne,

who had with difficulty allowed his companion to have all the talk to himself.

"Not yet, not yet, you ever love to be prating," said Roger Priver.

"I will speak; Master Pym, your house is to be attacked this night; the malignants are already on the road," said Browne, holding from his mouth the hand which Roger endeavoured to place upon it, to prevent his giving the information which he himself wished to convey in his own way.

"Why am I thus fooled? Do you Priver be silent, and let Master Browne tell his tale, if there be aught but drunken folly in it," said Pym.

Browne, in a few words explained that, as they passed through Dunster, by mingling in a crowd assembled about the Luttrell Arms, they had heard of a design to attack Pym's house, and burn it to the ground that night.

"Then we will prepare to defend ourselves, and give them a reception somewhat warmer than the treatment they meditate for us," said Pym, as he left the parlour, and sought the hall where the troopers were assembled.

Roger Priver and Master Browne followed him closely, and, after Pym had briefly stated to the troopers the news that they had brought, they fully confirmed their account by entering into minuter particulars. It appeared from their statement, that, relying upon the disguises they had assumed, they had sought the Luttrell Arms, to recover the horses which they had left behind them upon their previous visit to the hostelry. They did not succeed in finding them; but, while they were in the stables, they overheard the conversation of some of the Dunster men, in which the meditated attack on Cutcombe was fully disclosed. To escape from the hostelry unseen, and to make their way to Master Pym's, was all that was left to them to do; and they accomplished their purpose safely, as we have seen.

We will leave them to make what preparations for the defence of Cutcombe they deemed necessary, and return to Julian Bachell.

At the spot where it had been agreed upon that Julian should join the party from Dunster, he reined up his horse. No one was to be seen, no sound was to be heard.

"They cannot mean to play me false?" said Julian. Alick, who heard the remark, did not reply to it, nor could he comprehend the meaning of it.

"Hear you aught, Pearson?" said Julian.

"Nought, save the distant beating of the waves on the beach—and yet it cannot be that I hear; the wind is motionless, and the Channel-sea must be as smooth as glass; but I hear a something wondrously resembling the dash of waves on a pebbly shore."

"From which direction doth it come?" inquired Julian.

"From Dunster, an my ears deceive me not," replied the groom.

"It is well. Pearson, listen to me: the sounds you hear proceed from the marching of armed men: I am about to lead them on to attack Cutcombe and secure the person of Master Pym. I trust, as he is all unprepared for an attack, that we may succeed in our purpose, without the shedding of blood."

"I should like at least, to see the colour of the stuff that flows in the veins of his crop-

earred militia-men," said Alick. "I owe them a grudge, for the pistol-wound inflicted on your honoured father."

"I trust our struggle will be a bloodless one, our object being to secure Master Pym, and hand him over to the safe custody of the Royalists; but should a contest ensue, and I should fall, you will explain to my father what my object was in seeking Cutcombe, and tell him that my reasons for not admitting him to a knowledge of our purpose, was a fear that, from prudential considerations, he should mar it until Master Pym had intimation of it, and so thwart our designs."

"I would rather that his honour had known and approved of the scheme," said Alick; "but as it is, we must do our best to seize Master Pym and let him be the narrator of his own capture."

"Enough," said Julian. "I hear our men approaching, keep you close to my side."

The trampling of feet, the tread of horses, and the sounds of human voices, grew more distinct. Now and then a shout was heard, a burst of laughter, or the verse of a merry song; then an order for silence, in a voice which seemed to demand obe-

dience from the loudness of its tone, but which was responded to by hallooings and loud laughter.

"I fear me, sir, our men be far from sober," said Alick, "they be far too noisy for a night-surprise."

"They have no one to command them, at present," said Julian; "It will not be thus when they have placed themselves under my leading."

The party, to the number of fifty, came speedily on. Julian left the trees under which he had halted, and met them in the road. They greeted him with a loud shout, and for some moments seemed more inclined to persist in cheering him, than in listening to the plans he had formed for their proceedings. At last, Will Bowering and Alloway succeeded in obtaining silence. Julian, then, briefly told them, that they were to march in silence to the foot of the narrow lane that led up to Pym's house. There, those who were on horseback were to dismount and leave their horses, and proceed on foot as stealthily as they could, and surround the house. If any one opposed them, they were to secure him silently and without harming him, unless he resisted so as to endanger their lives.

A party, who were selected on the spot, were

then to force their way into the house, seize Master Pym, and convey him, on horseback to Dunster Castle, as speedily as they could, and give him into the custody of Colonel Wyndham ; leaving to the rest the task of preventing the troops from rendering him any assistance. Bowering and Alloway were put in command of the little party that were to enter the house and seize Pym, and Julian himself undertook to direct the movements of the larger body, who were to restrain the attempts of his garrison to rescue him.

“ Now, forward !” said Julian, “ and let the words be, whereby to distinguish friend from foe, Charles Stuart.”

On went the little troop in silence. The spot was gained where the horsemen were to dismount. The horses were secured in a grove of trees by their bridles, and the deep narrow lane, with a lofty hedge of hazel-bushes on either side of it, was entered. For about a quarter of a mile their progress was uninterrupted ; but, when they approached a gate which opened into the lawn, by which the mansion was surrounded, a trooper stood before them, and demanded what they wanted.

“ You, for one thing,” said Alloway, as he put

out his hand to seize him. A heavy blow laid him at the trooper's feet.

"Take that master militia-man," said Bowering, levelling a huge horse-pistol, and firing it at the man's head.

"Fool, rash fool!" said Julian, "your shot will act as an alarum. Forward, my men, and surround the house as speedily as may be."

He rushed to the gate, as he spoke, and attempted to open it. It was fastened, however, and he found it necessary to climb over it. He had scarcely done so, when he was seized in the grasp of two powerful men, thrown on his back, and disarmed.

"Treachery! to the rescue! to the rescue!" he shouted.

"Lie still, sir, and no harm will befall you," said a voice.

"To the rescue!—quick, here is Master Pym! seize him!" shouted Julian.

Will Bowering heard the cry, and repeated it to his followers. In a body they rushed upon the gate, which gave way before them.

"Halt! hearken to me!" shouted Pym. "Your

attempt is vain; you are surrounded on all sides, and your retreat is cut off. Surrender and no harm shall befall you."

"Hark to the canting knave," said Will; "here goes to secure him, and rescue Master Julian; follow, and remember Charles Stuart."

The words had scarcely passed Will's lips, ere a pike was driven through his arm, and he found himself pinned to the ground.

"It will be long ere thou revellest again at Culbone and tearest up the parchment writings and warrants of authority entrusted to thy betters," muttered the man who had wounded him and still held him down.

"Roger Priver—" said Will, "I know thee, and should be sorry to hurt thee, release me: man; I yield myself thy prisoner."

"There is life in him yet," said Priver as he withdrew his pike to repeat his thrust.

"Life, ay, and strength too," said Will as he sprung to his feet, and with his left hand dealt the ex-bailiff of Dunster a blow with the butt of his pistol which laid him at his feet. He did not stop to see whether he had slain him or not, but

rushed to the spot whence he had heard Julian's cry for aid. He could not reach it, however, for he was seized and disarmed by the troopers who stood near him.

The fight had become general, and many wounds and some death-blows had been given and received. The Dunster men, who fought bravely, were completely surrounded, and at last compelled to yield. Pym had exerted himself as much as he could to prevent more blood being shed than was necessary to insure him the victory; but the troopers, who had before been ill-treated at Ashley-Combe, would not be restrained, and pushed their thirst for vengeance further than their leader wished.

The whole affair did not last many minutes: when it was over, the prisoners were conveyed to a barn at the rear of the mansion, and, being disarmed, were allowed to seek their rest amidst the straw. Lights having been procured from the house, search was made for the dead, the dying, and the wounded.

The first body that was found deprived of life, was that of Alloway, the wrestling butcher of Mine-

head. By his side lay the trooper who had attacked him, about whose neck his fingers were clasped in a manner that showed how he had put his enemy to death, while his own life's blood was oozing from him. Roger Priver presented a frightful spectacle, for the blow of Will's pistol had broken the bones of his prominent nose, and laid it level with his face. One of his eyes too was nearly driven from its socket, and the brow hung over it, shewing a huge gash above it. He was conveyed within, insensible, but still breathing, and committed to the care of his companion, Robert Browne, who, instead of washing and attending to his wounds, cried over him as a father would have cried over a beloved child.

When Pym had seen that all his prisoners were disarmed, and the wounded on both sides properly attended to, he went into his house, and, having assured his family of his own safety and of the victory he had gained, turned into a small parlour on the right hand of the hall.

“Master Julian Bachell, I will not now waste time in reproaching you for this wanton outrage. You are my prisoner. I intend to detain you as

a hostage for the protection of my tenants and dependants during my absence. No harm shall happen to you, and your father shall be informed of the cause of your detention. You will accompany us to London, and in my house you shall find a home until these civil broils be over, a prisoner merely in name, provided you give me your parole not to attempt an escape. How say you?"

"What can I say? do with me as you will—but do not punish the misguided fools who would not have come hither had I not consented to lead them," said Julian.

"You give me your word then not to attempt an escape?" said Pym.

"I do, upon the terms you mention—I pledge you mine honour."

"Enough," said Pym. "Release Master Bachell and summon his groom, who is slightly wounded, but able to convey to his father any message he may wish to have delivered."

Julian's hands, which had been tied behind him, were unbound, and Alick Pearson, who had received a wound in the sword arm, was brought in to him. Writing materials were supplied, and in

Pym's presence Julian wrote a letter to his father, and told him all that had occurred, and that he had submitted himself a prisoner to Pym, being bound in honour not to attempt to regain his liberty.

"Within two hours after the departure of myself and my family," said Pym, "this your letter shall be sent to Ashley-Combe, and all your surviving friends shall be set at liberty. The wounded shall be cared for, the dead interred."

"I thank you," said Julian, "you are more merciful than I gave you credit for being, and have done for us more than we deserve."

"You may learn to know me better than you have done," said Pym, "but now it is necessary that you take some refreshment. In one hour our journey commences."

Julian, as the door closed upon Master Pym, rested his head upon his hands, and wept bitterly.

CHAPTER XIII.

WE must leave Somersetshire for some time and follow the fortunes of Hugh de Mohun.

In Gilbert Dynes he found a man deeply learned, not only in the ancient but in many of the modern languages. He had passed some time in Italy, in Holland, and in France, between the periods of taking his first and second degrees. That time he had not wasted ; for, besides having acquired the languages of those countries, he had studied painting and music under the best masters.

Gilbert Dynes was a reserved man, and it was not until some weeks had been spent by Hugh de Mohun under his tuition, that he discovered the prize he had drawn in the university lottery. How gladly did he avail himself of the offer made him to teach him the tongues of France and Italy, and

as he had made great progress in his studies under his deceased tutor and friend, Master Robert Snelling, he devoted many hours of each day to the acquirement of languages which he felt would be more useful to him in the career of life he had marked out for himself, than a further knowledge of the Greek and Latin classics.

Hugh had made up his mind not to enter into holy orders, although his patron, Master Luttrell wished him to do so. He had resolved to pursue a quiet course of study in the University, until an opportunity of entering the army and fighting on the side of the king should present itself to him. There no longer remained a doubt on the minds of men, that the civil war, which had commenced in the north, would be carried on with vigour until one or other of the great opposing powers should be entirely conquered. If the rebels, as the Parliamentarians were termed by the Royalists, should prove victorious, Hugh determined to offer his services to some foreign state, and there to acquire the name and fame which would entitle him at a future period to demand the hand of Mistress Prudence Everard.

He mentioned his views to Gilbert Dynes, who did all that man could do to persuade him to resign them and follow out the plans laid down for him by Master Luttrell; for he fondly believed that, if the King was triumphant over his foes, the Church would be restored to the same powerful position it had held previous to the reformation.

Gilbert Dynes was a profound and sincere believer in the divine right of kings: he worshipped Charles Stuart as a king by divine right; and he loved him as a man for his warm attachment to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the doctrines which he taught. He was a Laudian in theory and in practice, and in his church—the church of a parish in Oxford called Holywell—he devoutly carried out the letter as well as the spirit of the rubrics.

Hugh de Mohun had been used to see the services of the Church performed by his old tutor, Master Snelling, in a way so orthodox as to give offence to some, who, like Master Roger Priver, had adopted presbyterian notions; but he was much surprised and not a little shocked to find

in Holywell church, many things that bordered so closely upon the forms and ceremonies of the Romanists as to lead him to suppose that Gilbert Dynes, during his travels in Italy, had not spent all his time, or devoted all his thoughts, to the acquirement of the Italian language or the art of painting.

Holywell church was a small building just without the eastern wall of the city. It was more commonly known in those days by the name of St. Cross. It stood on Holywell green. near to which was a wool-market, on the banks of the river Cherwell. Near it stood a large stone cross whence, probably, it derived its name. Not far from it was a spring whose waters were supposed to possess miraculous powers in healing various diseases.

To this church Hugh de Mohun accompanied his tutor on the morning of the first Sunday which he spent in Oxford. Upon his entrance, he could not fail to observe a vast difference between its internal arrangements and those of the church of Dunster: pews there were none; low benches, with a narrow rail to hold a book, and another be-

low for the worshipper to kneel upon, were arranged on either side of the aisle.

There was a pulpit on one side of the entrance to the chancel and a reading desk on the other, so arranged that the officiating clergyman might change his position while performing different parts of the service. But that which most particularly drew the attention of Hugh, was the communion table: it was a handsomely carved stone altar: on it were placed a huge pair of golden or gilded candlesticks, holding two large lighted wax candles. It was decked, too, with such flowers as were in season, and in the centre of it, stood a large figure of our Saviour on the Cross. Hugh could not but observe that, as his tutor approached this altar on his way to the vestry, he made a low obeisance to it.

The congregation was very small, but all seemed to follow the clergyman with zealous earnestness, and to make the responses clearly and loudly, but in a singing manner, closely resembling chanting, especially in reciting the Psalms. The sermon, which was very short, commenting on the lessons of the day, was preached in the surplice;

the prayer for the church militant was read; a collection made for the poorer parishioners during the reading of the offertory sentences; and then those who were not inclined or allowed to communicate left the church, having been previously informed of the fasts, vigils and feasts which they were to observe during the following week.

Hugh de Mohun was amongst those who remained to take the sacrament. The Elements, he saw, were not placed ready upon the table, or altar—but carried thither by Gilbert Dynes himself from a credence table. After the conclusion of the ceremony, the cup was carefully drained to its last drop, and even the minutest crumb of bread eaten by the clergyman.

There were many things in this to him, unusual method of performing the service of the church that gave food for much thought to the youthful student, but, as his tutor made no remark upon them, Hugh modestly remained silent during their walk home to Merton College.

After their early dinner was over—for Hugh had been invited to the table of his tutor that day—

he sallied out of the postern gate of Merton into the meadows behind it. Having taken what he deemed sufficient exercise, he returned to his rooms to perform certain duties which had been pointed out to him by his tutor as consistent with the holiness of the day, namely to translate a portion of the works of "The Fathers."

While he was engaged on his task, Perkin Doyle, who performed the offices of bed-maker and waiter, entered the room, and after arranging every thing that was or might be wanted, hung about the rooms in a way, which at length, as he intended it should, roused Hugh's attention.

"Thanks, Perkin—thanks; I have no need to detain you from your evening's walk. My pipe I see is placed ready at hand, and materials for my supper whenever I feel disposed to take it."

"It is early yet, sir, and I have somewhat to propose which may cause you to defer your supper to a later hour than ordinary. The cold meat will not get colder, nor will our College ale get flat while you just spend an hour or so without the city walls. There is a bull to be baited on the

place, called Cowley marshes, just beyond the church of St. Clement," said Perkin in a most insinuating tone.

"A bull to be baited! and on a Sunday?" said Hugh.

"And wherefore not? It is among the pastimes allowed by the law. All the city—that is the loyalists—will be there, if it be but to show their hatred to the canting knaves who have sprung up among them, like mushrooms from the spawn engendered in the muck-heaps of Puritanism. You must be dull enough here now, sir, seeing that you have no companion but good Master Dynes, and I thought you might like to exchange the gloominess of this room for the gaiety of the bull-ring," said Perkin.

"I have hitherto been taught to observe this day differently," said Hugh, "and the baiting of a bull is not among the permitted pastimes of the people."

"And very properly too—when there were no Roundhead knaves to cry out against the lawfulness of such recreations. But, now it is altogether different, it behoves us, of the true faith and ortho-

doxy, to set them at defiance. Every true man ay and every woman too, will be there—as you will see—”

“I shall not see, Perkin, for I shall not go out—” said Hugh.

“Oh! if the young men were but up—but it is the vacation—you would have plenty of companions and we should have a glorious scene.”

“Do you mean to tell me that, if my fellow-students were here, they would go, on a Sunday, and be spectators at a bull-baiting?” asked Hugh.

“Not a doubt but they would, to a man—the whole university.”

“Will Master Gilbert Dynes be there, think you?” said Hugh, slyly scanning Perkin’s face.

“It is not consistent with his offices of College Tutor and Clergyman; otherwise I have not a doubt but he would be among the first to be present,” said Perkin without a blush.

“I will e’en to him, then, and ask him permission to witness—”

“’Twere better not—better not. He must act upon his notions of discipline. You will have ample time to witness the sports and be back be-

fore the gates are closed and even should you be compelled to knock in after hours—you will readily find an available excuse for your absence," said Perkin. "It will be a pleasant sight and there will be no lack of pretty forms and faces, for the citizens, wives and daughters of Oxford may compare in grace and beauty with any of their fair country-women."

"I would go," said Hugh, "if I thought Master Gilbert Dynes would not—"

"He will not—he cannot—if you are only cautious," said Perkin.

"Well, if you think he would not object to it I will go and with pleasure, for I own to being somewhat dull," said Hugh.

For "object to it" Perkin meant "find it out," but he did not choose to say so. He offered his services to the student to shew him the way through the eastern gate of the city and by Magdalen College towards the marshes of Cowley. They were readily accepted by Hugh, who, doffing his university costume and assuming the dress of sable which he had worn since the death of his former tutor, followed Perkin Doyle through

the gate of the College near to St. John's Chapel and thence up Magpie lane into the High Street.

"It needs not that I accompany you further, sir," said Perkin Doyle, "follow you that youth—I know him right well and know too that he is for the sports on Cowley marshes. I will e'en take my family to witness them."

Hugh de Mohun saw an ungainly boy before him, who seemed to be about ten or eleven years of age, but was tall, bony and strongly built. He carried a large ashen stick under his arm. His hands were in the pockets of his outer vest and his eyes were cast down upon the road he was traversing.

"I have seen that boy before this," said Hugh, "but where I cannot tell: yes—now that I recollect myself, he formed one of our congregation this morning."

"Not unlikely, sir," said Perkin "that is the young Anthony Wood or, as it pleases him to call himself, Anthony à Wood or, more classically, Antonius a Bosco. He is, as you see, in a mourning suit, having just lost his father. He is an odd boy, and dwells nearly opposite our college gates.

He is, moreover, a favourite of Master Dynes's seeing that he is clever in the art of playing on musical instruments. He knoweth somewhat of the smaller viol, called the violin, though, as I have heard our dean say, he breaketh through all acknowledged rules by tuning his instrument by fourths instead of fifths, and yet he discourseth most excellent music for one so young."

Hugh de Mohun let Perkin Doyle leave him as soon as he had given him this brief sketch of the boy whom, in after years, Oxford prized as one of her most faithful historians. He followed the boy to the spot where the sports were to take place and there lost sight of him amidst the vast crowds assembled to see the bull baited.

"Make way!—way there!—for one of our university friends of the right way of thinking," said a huge butcherly looking individual. "He is not in gown and cap, but nevertheless there is no mistaking him for any other but one of the students—way there!—way!"

"Up with the Cavaliers down with the Puritans, and way for an honest student!" shouted the crowd.

"I prythee, my tall friend, take me along with thee. I am but a mere child but I would fain see the fun," said a sort of cracked voice between that of a child and a grown-up person in Hugh's ears.

He looked round and saw Anthony Wood, and, taking him by the hand, passed into the space next to the circle wherein the bull was to be baited.

"I thank thee for this, Master Merton-student, for as such I know you—and when this show is over will question you somewhat closer," said Anthony Wood. "Look you here, now; there stands the post with a goodly ring fixed to it and a cable-like rope to which the bull is to be fastened. I will wager thee the weight of this stick of mine in gold or silver that they—the rabble—will give to the bull some name connected with these troublous times. See, yonder he comes, and truly he is a goodly animal."

Hugh looked in the direction pointed out by his young friend, and saw a fine, fierce-looking bull led along by several men, who guided him as quietly as if he had been an infant by means of a ring which had been passed through the cartilage that divided his nostrils.

"Here comes Sir John Hotham," shouted the crowd.

"Said I not right?" screamed the boy.

"How mean you?" asked Hugh.

"They have named the beast they are about to worry, Hotham—Sir John Hotham—the man who has dared to exclude our rightful sovereign from his own town of Hull. See if they do not name every dog that is set upon him by a more dignified title—see—he is tied to the stake and away goes a dog at him. Hurrah!" shouted the boy.

"To him Cavalier!" screamed the spectators.

"Ah he hath him tight—but no—see the brute tosses him fairly over his back," said Wood, as poor Cavalier flew up into the air and fell heavily on the ground with his bowels ripped open.

"I would that the pope of Rome had a bull that would serve the ranting Roundheads the same," said the boy. "They talk largely of their bowels of compassion towards us benighted loyalists, and I would fain see the interior of them to know if their contents be any thing but foulness—faugh! how I hate them!"

Hugh fairly laughed at Wood's vehemence, but the boy heeded him not.

"See," cried he, "here cometh another; what will they call him I marvel?"

In rushed a dog amidst cries of "Now, Bishop, worry him!"

"A goodly name," said Wood "ay and a goodly nature too. See he hath pinned poor Hotham—but hah! the coward, he is afraid of being sent to the Tower and hath been tossed over as he deserves."

The poor bull was subjected to many attacks from dogs bearing most royal and loyal names, but he still maintained his ground to the great annoyance of the crowd who were impatient to see the puritan beast conquered. At last, a big, resolute-looking dog came in sight, and his appearance elicited loud and prolonged applause

'Name, name, name?' cried the crowd.

"An it please you, my masters all, I call him Charles Stuart, or Charles the King, whichever it pleases you," said the owner.

"A Stuart!—a Stuart!—let him go and see if Master Hotham be not beaten!"

"Charles Stuart" was slipped at the bull, seized him fiercely, and held him so tightly that all his maddened efforts could not enable him to throw him off. After using every means in his power to rid himself of his foe, the bull, Sir John Hotham, sank on the ground and gave himself up to the attacks of Charles Stuart without a struggle.

Loud shouts of "The king for ever! long live the king!—down with the puritans and the parliament!" in which Master Anthony Wood joined with great vigour, shewed to Hugh that the sport which was meant to stimulate the zeal of the Oxonian loyalists in defence of their king was over. He was annoyed, as he left the spot, to think that he should have felt as much excited against the poor bull as most or all of those around him had been.

"You will be too late to get into Merton by the front gates, and the postern is fastened," said a voice by his side as he passed near to the back gates of Oriel College.

"Never mind, my boy," said Hugh, looking round and smiling kindly on Anthony Wood.

"I don't mind: it is for you to mind, for, had

it come to the knowledge of Master Brent—I crave his pardon, Doctor Brent your warden—that you had been a sharer in these sports yonder his puritanical ideas might have goaded him on to expel you from the university. But trust to me; I am fond of peering and prying about in all odd places and know a means of gaining you access to your rooms without a shadow of suspicion falling upon you.”

Hugh followed the rapid paces of the boy to the field which divided the Hall of St. Alban’s from Merton College.

“Over here,” said Wood, springing across a ditch. “Now—see you these loosened stones in the old wall? Climb them fearlessly—now you are on the top—over with you and fear not—you are a fair two yards in length and it is but three to the ground. Farewell—I will see you to morrow.”

Hugh dropped and found himself within the walls of his college.

CHAPTER XIV.

HUGH's entrance into Merton by means of the ancient wall was not known to, and consequently not commented on, by Gilbert Dynes or Doctor Brent. Perkin Doyle, who had been informed of the method by which the student had escaped the observation of the porter by Anthony Wood, was too old in the servicee to betray the secret. "Hundreds have done the same and what should I get by informing against them?" was the question he put to himself—the ready answer to it was "Nothing, but the name of a spy." And with this the college servant was satisfied.

In Anthony Wood Hugh found an agreeable companion. When the hours which he devoted to his studies were over, the boy would tap at his

door and ask him to take a stroll with him. Hugh was ready enough to grant him his request, but he could seldom induce him to quit the town for the country, and was generally forced to submit to be led from one College or Hall to another, and to listen to the boy's account of its founders and benefactors, and of the curiosities contained within its walls. But if Wood could succeed in getting his companion into the the Bodleian library, he would not allow him to escape until the hour arrived at which the doors were closed.

Master Anthony had no right whatever, by the rules and regulations, to have access to the library, but Dr. James, of New College, the librarian, seeing the excessive zeal of the boy in perusing old manuscripts, and finding out rare editions and curious papers, could not find it in his heart to exclude him. The present time, too, made Anthony more regular in his visits, as the doctor and his assistant were busily engaged in arranging and making a catalogue of a collection of Greek manuscripts, made by Francis Baroccio, the Venetian, which the chancellor, Lord Pembroke, by Laud's permission, had presented to the University.

As Hugh de Mohun had no other companion and no other means of passing his leisure hours so advantageously, he joined the boy in examining and classifying these curious and rare manuscripts and at last found much satisfaction and amusement in the employment.

In this quiet way he passed nearly two months, during which he heard only once from his friends at Dunster, where nothing of importance had occurred since he had left it. Mistress Luttrell and Prudence Everard were still, with the children, at Colonel Wyndham's at Luxborough. Of Julian Bachell nothing was known beyond his living with Master John Pym in London; but rumours were rife, that his father, finding his solitary life at Ashley-Combe unendurable, had resolved to set out to join the king, who, having withdrawn from the blockade of Hull, was about to assemble all his forces at Shrewsbury.

"There be rare news arrived," said Perkin Doyle, as he placed Hugh's breakfast on his table; "the city is in a ferment and no wonder."

"What hath occurred then?" asked Hugh, scarcely lifting his head from the book he was engaged with.

"The king, it seems, hath sent a royal mandate that the town be straightway fortified; as he intends making it his winter if not his head quarters."

"Cometh he hither in person?" inquired Hugh anxiously.

"Nay, to that query I can give no answer; all the information I can give you is, that the mandate hath arrived and that the mayor and the corporation are now with the vice-chancellor to arrange in what way the royal commands may be best obeyed. But here comes Master Anthony, and be assured that he has already ferreted out all that is to be learned."

"Throw aside your book, Master Hugh," said Wood, running into the room, "dispatch your meal and come with me."

"Whither, boy?" said Hugh.

"To the city walls: there is Mr. Vice-chancellor, with his proctors, and the worshipful the mayor with all his brethren in office going, by order of the king, to turn this peaceful place of learning into a fortress. Master Rallingson, of Queen's, the great mathematician, though he

be but a youth and a mere bachelor in arts, hath been summoned to meet the authorities, and hath taken upon him, at their request, to superintend the works. I will be there every spare hour and watch his progress."

"And leave the Bodleian and Boraccio's papers?"

"Ay, that will I—for the present," said the excited boy, "for, in defending the city to protect the king, am I not defending the library too? Rely upon it, if the accursed rebel roundheads once get access to Sir Thomas Bodley's book-shelves they will pretend that their contents are instruments for the furtherance of papistical doctrines and devote them to the flames. But come—finish your morning's meal, and let us go join the party on the walls."

Hugh de Mohun mischievously prolonged his meal, to amuse himself by watching Wood's impatience; nor would he have brought it to so speedy a close as he did, had not the boy, after traversing the room and uttering a series of expostulations on the enormity of some people's appetites, threatened to go to the walls without his companion.

"There," said Hugh "I have at length finished my slender repast, and, if it produce a fit of indigestion, I shall lay the blame upon you, who have scarcely given me time for the due mastication of my brown George."

"I could have eaten some half a dozen brown Georges, as you call your rolls, and half a score eggs too in less time than you have consumed in swallowing one of each—but come—we shall be too late to hear what Master Rallingson's plans are to be."

"I must first go and excuse myself to Master Dynes for being absent from my lectures this morning and then—"

"Pish! come at once. Gilbert Dynes is too loyal a subject not to be pleased that you think more of the king's mandate than you do of one of his lectures," said Anthony. "Come."

"Nay, it will be but civil and dutiful just to call and say that I need not confine him to his rooms waiting for my appearance," said Hugh.

"I will go to him, myself," said the boy, "while you are putting on your walking dress. It will answer your purpose, and save time."

Away ran Anthony, and when he had returned he found Hugh ready to accompany him, and not only Hugh, but the Dean, Gilbert Dynes, who was too much interested in the news he had heard, not to wish to see how the king's wishes were to be complied with.

As they passed into the High Street, from Oriel lane, they saw a crowd assembled round the university crier, who, by the order of the vice-chancellor, was giving notice that the services of all who were loyally disposed were required to place the university and city in such a state of defence as should enable the king to take up his quarters therein in safety.

With loud shouts of "God save King Charles!" the crowd rushed towards the spot where they were informed their services would be needed, and among them ran Anthony Wood, leaving Hugh to follow with his tutor at a slower and more dignified pace. When they reached what is now called "Long Wall" they found the vice-chancellor with the mayor and a large body of followers. With them they went round the city walls, and listened to the plans of the young mathematician

for their restoration where they were ruinous or deficient, and for the erection of fresh walls wherever the old ones had been destroyed or fallen completely into decay.

So great was the zeal of the citizens and the few members of the university who were then in Oxford, that hundreds—among whom were many who had never handled spade or pick-axe before—were busily engaged in performing the work which had been set them. Even Gilbert Dynes laid aside his furred Master's gown and set to work with his spade by the side of his pupil and Anthony Wood. He worked so hard, however, and the weather was so warm that, all unused as he was to such violent exertion, he brought on a bilious attack, and was forced to resign his spade to abler hands and to take to his bed under the orders of his apothecary.

As his tutor was unwell, Hugh de Mohun went daily to the works, and always accompanied by Anthony Wood, who seemed to have forgotten that there was such a place as the Bodleian library. He was always at the very bottom of the trench that was being excavated, and Hugh could not tell

why, until he discovered that he was busily employed in examining every shovelful of earth that was thrown up, in hopes of finding a coin or some other bit of antiquity.

In truth, the boy found many things that fully rewarded him for his trouble. Little bits of broken earthenware, a cracked specimen of old armour, a weapon of some kind, a drinking cup, or a cooking-vessel—all were esteemed valuable fish that came to his net, and were thrust, dirty as they were, with the greatest eagerness into the folds of his doublet.

As to work, he did none. He ran backward and forward, and seemed to be ubiquitous. At first, he excited the anger of many of the hired workmen, who seemed to think he was set as a spy upon them in case they should find a treasure; but when it was discovered who he was—the orphan boy of old Wood of Merton lane, and that he had paid away all his little store of pocket money for trumpery bits of iron, brass, or earthenware, he was not only tolerated among the thickest companies of the labourers, but sought for, and furnished with many specimens which he esteemed whilst their discoverers despised them.

Hugh de Mohun was not sorry when the sabbath came to justify him in ceasing from his labours. He, as many others, equally unused to such exertions had done, had slaved for six days harder than the labourers paid by the university and city. He had lived but little better too, and had scarcely been able to enjoy a night's rest; so wearied were his limbs from the unwonted toil.

"To-morrow," said he, as he nodded over his pipe and his tankard of Merton ale, previously to seeking his bed, "to-morrow I will lie as long as I can sleep, and rise fit for harder work on Monday."

Who can tell what a day or a night will bring forth?

Hugh de Mohun, calculating on Gilbert Dynes' indisposition, intended to read the service of the day in his own rooms instead of attending Holywell church, where he doubted not some friend, deputed by the Dean, would officiate for him. With this impression on his mind he fell asleep. How long he had slept he knew not; but, in his

own estimation, little more than a short hour, when he was roused by the voice of Anthony Wood.

"Get thee gone, boy—get thee gone, for the present. I am a-weary, leave me, and return by and by," said he, turning round and composing himself for another sleep.

"Master Hugh de Mohun—wake I pray of you, rouse yourself. I would not disturb you—for I am worn out myself and can sympathize with you—had not something occurred which vitally affects your friend and mine; I mean Master Gilbert Dynes," said Anthony.

"Is he worse?—let him send for another apothecary or a physician. I can do him no good; do leave me boy—good boy," said Hugh, hugging his pillow more closely.

"Hear me and bear with me but for a few minutes, and if my tidings be not such as justify my having roused you from your sleep, never admit me into your rooms again," said the boy in tones so serious and so earnest, that Hugh turned round on his pallet and gazed at him.

"Hast lost some bit of brass or some old coin?" asked Hugh, smiling.

"I have lost nothing; what I have to communicate does not concern myself, but our kind friend Gilbert Dynes: are you sufficiently awake to listen to what I have to tell you?"

"Ay—indeed am I, speak on."

"You are aware that Gilbert Dynes hath, from conscientious motives, persevered in retaining such religious ceremonies and observances in his church of St. Cross as he deems consistent with the rubric," said Anthony.

"Perfectly aware of it, boy, although I confess I have grieved to see it; inasmuch, as it seems to me, he has driven away his congregation by holding to forms that savour too much of papistical ceremonies to be pleasing or profitable in these ticklish times. Like the dog in the fable, in grasping at the shadow he hath dropped the bone, but not the bone of contention," said Hugh.

"He doth but act, as I said before, consistently with the rubric, and the oath which he took upon him at his ordination. It seems, however, that, by so doing, he hath incurred the enmity of some

of his parishioners, puritans doubtless, who have laid a complaint before Dr. Robert Skynner, the bishop of the diocese, who, from his prison in the Tower—for he is one of the eleven bishops shut up with the Archbishop of York—has authorized the wardens of the church of St. Cross to expostulate with him and to suggest to him to cease from such parts of the innovations, so they are pleased to term them, as are displeasing to the parishioners.”

“Sensible advice indeed, boy; he has yielded I trust, and thereby shown, that, in his zeal to perform his duty in a way which he believes consistent with his oaths, he is not willing to hurt the consciences of the weaker brethren, who deem the mode in which he hath performed the services of the church somewhat too closely bordering on the papistical,” said Hugh.

“What *he* will do, I know not. I am here to tell you what others have already done in the matter,” said the boy. “Gilbert Dynes is too ill to leave his bed and hath appointed a friend to officiate for him; but his services will not be required.”

“How mean you? you are as mysterious as the Delphic oracle this morning. Speak out, boy,” said Hugh.

"I am almost ashamed to tell you that, in this loyal and church-loving city of Oxford, men have been found ready and willing to commit a gross sacrilege. The church of St. Cross, or Holywell, as it is more commonly called—hath been broken into, and, as I am informed, (for I have it only upon report) been sadly defaced by the hands of rude men, led on, doubtless, by the rascally puritans."

"Sit down in my outer room for a few moments while I dress myself," said Hugh. "We will go to St. Cross and see with our own eyes if this report be true or not."

A few moments, and but a few, were consumed by Hugh in putting on his clothes, and, without waiting to break his fast, he left the college with Anthony Wood, and, as rapidly as they could, they sought the scene of what the boy had called sacrilege.

A large crowd was collected on Holywell green, among whom Hugh recognized a vast number of men who had displayed their loyalty by working at his side in the trenches made for the defence of the town. They seemed to be frantic and almost maniacal. They were shouting, screaming, and hooting

most discordantly, and dancing round an image dressed in a church-surplice and suspended on a kind of gibbet, beneath which a heap of straw and bundles of faggots had been placed. These were set on fire by a woman bearing a torch, just as they arrived at the spot.

"That figure," said Anthony Wood "is, I doubt not, intended to represent our friend Dynes, but let us leave the crowd to do a wicked deed, which it is out of our power to prevent, and seek the church to see if the report I have heard be true."

Hugh de Mohun followed the boy at the rear of the crowd, who were too busily engaged in shouting No Popery! and watching the flames as they encircled the effigy of his tutor, to notice them, and gained the church.

"It is as they reported it," said the boy, "see, the stone altar-piece is broken into fragments the painted window hath not a pane left entire. The credence table is removed, with the candlesticks and the altar chairs, and they are, no doubt, feeding the flames. There lies the image of our crucified Lord and even the pulpit, the reading desk, the lectern, and the faldstools are destroyed."

Hugh de Mohun saw that the work of destruction was complete, and sadly returned to Merton, to convey the unpleasant tidings to Gilbert Dynes, before they should have reached his ears from the report of others, who would inform him of them, he thought, less cautiously than he should do.

CHAPTER XV.

HUGH de Mohun, having eaten his breakfast and sent his servant, Perkin Doyle, to request a few minutes' conversation with his tutor, Gilbert Dynes, was allowed to visit him.

On entering his outer room, he found two medical men consulting together on his case. They stared at Hugh on his entrance, and one of them snappishly asked him who he was and what was his business?

Hugh explained the purport of his visit, and stated that he had received the permission of the invalid to wait upon him.

"Go then, by all means, and his blood, that is, his death, be upon you," said the snappish gentleman.

"I think, under favour," said the other, a junior, "I think that the scholar may visit his tutor without any serious risk."

"A mere apothecary, sir, has no right to argue with or dispute the commands of a physician," said the elder. "Let him go—let him visit our patient—let him kill him for all that I care. I protest against it, that's all. Be the blame upon your shoulders, not upon mine: we meet to-morrow at the same hour."

So saying, the physician took up his cap, and walked majestically out of the room, not in the least regarding or replying to the humble salute of the apothecary.

"Tell me, sir," said Hugh, "will my interview with Master Dynes and the unpleasant news I have to communicate to him be at all injurious in their effects?"

"I am of opinion that they will not; but I am under orders. A physician hath been called in, when there was no necessity for his intrusion, and I must abide by his superior orders or take upon myself any bad consequences that may ensue from your interview," said the apothecary.

“Who took it upon him to send for additional aid?” enquired Hugh.

“Dr. Brent, the warden, or custos, of the college,” replied the apothecary. “He hath an aversion to me, because forsooth, he believes, or professes to believe, that I sign the *Æger* certificates of his undergraduates, when nothing ails them but an unwillingness to attend lectures, hall, and chapel.”

Hugh smiled at the notion, and the apothecary, observing it, burst out into a loud laugh, and, changing his manner and the tones of his voice, assured Hugh that, if he wished to shirk a lecture or an early chapel, he had only to send for *him*.” He added that “the medicine, which, for form’s sake must be sent in with the certificate of sickness, should be very palatable, and in no wise nauseous in taste or unpleasant in its effects.”

Hugh could not but smile again, and, having ascertained that his visit and the communication he was about to make would have no serious effects upon Gilbert Dynes, he bowed the goodnatured apothecary out of the room.

"Hugh de Mohun, I am glad to see you," said Dynes, as his pupil entered his sleeping-room and drew aside the curtains of his bed. "I have been, and still am very ill; but I do not think that I needed a physician. I was recovering from the severity of the attack under the skilful hands of the apothecary, but as Dr. Brent, doubtless in his zeal to secure my services to the college, deemed it necessary to call in further and more efficient aid, I submitted—but I cannot say cheerfully. How get you on in your studies?"

"I fear me," said Hugh, "that my studies have of late been confined to the nature of the under-soil around Oxford, seeing that I have been in the trenches daily, working hard to carry out Master Rallingson's plans for the defence of the town."

"Right—right, I remember me well now—I did essay to assist, but *materiem superabat opus*, the work was too much for my slender build—which is a new translation of the well known sentence—and I have been laid up ever since. What is the day? for I have forgotten my reckoning, as seamen say, while lying here in my bed."

"It is Sunday, sir," said Hugh.

"Ah! now I remember, so it is. I requested my friend Dr. James of New College to officiate for me. Doubtless you have attended his ministry; did he conform in all things to the rubric?" asked Gilbert Dynes.

"I have been to St. Cross, or Holywell, but not to divine service," said Hugh.

"And why not? surely the absence of the regular minister need not drive away the worshipper," said Dynes.

"Can you, without pain to yourself, listen to unpleasant tidings?" enquired the scholar, looking anxiously in his tutor's face.

"I cannot bear suspense, and, now that you have hinted at something likely to give me pain, I would pray you to speak out,—rely upon me that I can bear it," said Dynes.

"You must pardon me if I unwittingly hurt your feelings in what I am about to disclose," said Hugh. "You have, in despite of representations from high quarters, persevered in performing the services of the church in a way which hath given offence to many sincere worshippers, who

cannot but believe that religion does not consist in mere outward ceremonies and formal observances."

"I have but acted upon mine oath to observe the rubrics," said, Dynes, "and as long as I am an officiating minister in the house of God, I will continue, conscientiously, to do so."

"Those who cannot judge of your reasons deem that the rites and ceremonies you adhere to savour too much of Romanism, or, as they are wont to call it, papistry. They accuse you of believing the rubrics, the mere work of men's hands, of divine origin, and more binding than the Holy Scriptures themselves."

"God forgive them!" groaned Dynes, "but tell me the consequences of this belief."

"You have spoken disparagingly of the Reformation too."

"I have done so, because I believe that, in their excessive zeal for the subversion of popery the reformers did seriously injure the Church—the Catholic or Universal Church—but go on. I am prepared for your worst news," said Dynes, closing his eyes and clasping his hands over them.

"These things have given offence to men who are of protestant feelings and loyal withal. An order hath come out from Dr. Robert Skynner, the bishop of the diocese, from his prison in the Tower, which all but you have obeyed, and—"

"I cannot do so conscientiously—I have great respect for the Episcopal authority, but my vows—my vows—go on," groaned Dynes.

"I grieve to say it—but your church of St. Cross hath this morning been—"

"No—no—say it not—tell me not of it—they have not dared to commit so gross an act of sacrilege! but yet speak out; let me know the worst at once," and Gilbert withdrew his hands from his eyes and gazed calmly and stedfastly on his pupil.

"I would fain—I would—let me reserve my news until you are more fitted to receive them."

"No—speak out—boldly out. I can bear your news."

"The church of St. Cross is, internally, a ruin. The altar-piece—"

"Go on."

"The altar-piece, I would say the altar itself,

hath been demolished with hammers. It is broken into fragments."

"Go on—go on."

"The painted window above it is—"

"Destroyed—well!—go on—"

"The candlesticks and the credence table and the faldstools are—"

"Yes—yes—burned, or broken, or both—but—go on."

"The image of our—"

"Say it not—say it not—they have not dared—oh—do say and say it calmly and slowly, that every syllable may fall on my ear distinctly, that they have not dared to—"

"It is burned with the rest," said Hugh.

"I will not believe it, without the evidence of my own eyes; no Englishman, professing to be a churchman, could be guilty of such an act, as to destroy the symbol of his faith, with the figure of Him who died for his sins upon it," said Gilbert Dynes, endeavouring to rise from his bed.

"Nay good sir, do not rise I entreat of you!" said Hugh, laying his hand upon his tutor's shoulder.

"I bid you, on your allegiance, on the faith you owe to the University, to release me. I will arise," said Dynes.

"Would that my tongue had been torn out by the roots ere I had revealed to you what has happened! but I did it for the best," said Hugh de Mohun. "If you will leave your bed, with the risk of your life, at least let me summon Perkin Doyle to aid you."

"I need not any aid; I am strong in a good cause," said Dynes, "and yet methinks I feel somewhat giddy and weak when I attempt to rise. You may summon Perkin Doyle: be here, however, yourself, for I will visit my church—ay and perform the services of it in person this day."

"I go to summon Doyle," said Hugh, "if you will let me see you lying composedly ere I leave you."

The tutor fell back in his bed and kissed the hand that was laid on his shoulder. Hugh left him, but, instead of seeking Perkin Doyle, he sought the apothecary, and, having acquainted him with the result of his communications, begged of him to visit his patient, and not to leave him

until he should deem him safe from any return of the excitement under which he had been labouring.

"A composing draught will set all to rights," said the apothecary, "and I will administer it although all the physicians in Oxford, ay, and in England, should pronounce it bad practice."

The dose was compounded and administered. Its effects were such as the medical attendant anticipated: Gilbert Dynes fell into a deep sleep from which he did not wake for many hours. When he did wake, his mind was evidently wandering, and Hugh de Mohun, who had passed the day by his bed-side, relieved only during his meal-times by Perkin Doyle and young Anthony Wood, was alarmed by perceiving that, although he heard and saw all that was going on about him, his replies to questions that were put to him had no reference to them, but evidently alluded to something or another connected with the scenes of sacrilege that his pupil had communicated to him.

The apothecary was summoned, and attributed the wandering of his patient's mind to the effects of the opiate which he had administered, but fear-

lessly asserted that a little additional sleep would restore him to his senses and that he would awake improved in his general health.

With these assurances Hugh de Mohun was satisfied to remain with his tutor during the night, and after the apothecary had left, he dismissed Perkin Doyle and Anthony Wood, of whose services he did not think that he should stand in need. The boy was unwilling to quit his friend, and begged hard to be allowed to remain in college, promising to seek sleep in Hugh's bed so as to be ready to relieve him from his watch, when he was fatigued. Hugh, however, was firm, and saw him safely locked out of the gates.

Until midnight, Gilbert Dynes slept so soundly as not to interrupt his watchful pupil, who was passing the hours in reading, by breathing aloud or moving; but, just as Great Tom, from the campanile of the cathedral, announced that a new day was born, a shriek, a fearful shriek from the little bed-room roused Hugh and called him from his book to the side of the patient.

“My clothes, my clothes—Perkin Doyle, give me my clothes—I will away to St. Cross—though

I be weak in body I am strong in mind, and I will withstand the desecrations of God's holy temple," screamed Gilbert Dynes, as he sprung from his bed just as Hugh entered the room.

"I pray you, sir, to lie down again—it is midnight and this sudden exposure to the cold air may prove serious," said Hugh, as he laid his hand upon Gilbert's arm.

"Unhand me, Perkin Doyle, let me not, I implore of you. Duty calls me hence and I will not quail, I will show myself to be a faithful pastor when danger impends over my flock."

"I entreat you, sir, lie down," said Hugh, placing the light on the dressing table and exerting a gentle force to lead his tutor to the bed.

"Oh oh!—who art thou who wouldst obstruct me in my duties? but reply not—I know thee,—thou sour puritan—thou schismatic—away!—hence! leave me lest I curse thee for the sacrilege thou hast this day committed," shrieked the poor fevered patient.

"It is I—I, your pupil, Hugh de Mohun, let me persuade you to—"

"Ah! what? whom dost call thyself?"

“ Hugh de Mohun, your grateful pupil.”

“ I was taught by one who professed to know you well, to expect in you a friend to the good cause, to the restoration of the true faith, but I am deceived. You—you led them on to the destruction of God’s temple—but you are in my power and I will punish you on the spot for the crimes you have committed.”

Gilbert Dynes uttered the first part of this address so calmly—even solemnly, that Hugh released the hold he had upon his arms, fully expecting to hear something of himself which Dynes had learnt from some unknown friend; but, when he addressed him as the destroyer of his church, he perceived his error and tried again to secure his friend. It was too late, for, with a spring, such as the tiger is said to make at its prey, Dynes rushed upon him and seized him by the throat.

Hugh was, as we have said, a very powerful man, but such was the strength with which mania had gifted his attacker, that he had great difficulty in freeing himself from his grasp. When he had succeeded in doing so, he dragged him towards the table, on which the light was placed, and recollect-

ing the power which the eye is supposed to exert over insane persons, gazed at him fiercely and fixedly. The patient met his gaze with glaring eye-balls, but in a few seconds his fierceness was exchanged for a look of terror; his eyes were closed; —a tremor passed over his frame, and he would have fallen to the ground, had not Hugh caught him and thrown him on his bed, where he lay screaming and shrieking frightfully.

What was to be done? no assistance could be procured nearer than the porter's lodge, and Hugh did not dare to leave the sick man to seek it there. He waited in hopes that the paroxysm might be succeeded by sleep, and thus enable him to leave him for a short period; but his hopes were vain—every moment Gilbert grew more violent and it was with difficulty Hugh could hold him down on his bed.

“What can I do? how am I to act in this painful business?” said Hugh, bursting into a fierce storm of grief at the sight of his friend's sufferings.

“Put your trust in Heaven, my son,” said a voice which Hugh gladly recognized as the voice of the mediciner, Dr. Graveboys. He turned round and

beheld his old friend and Dr. Brent, the warden of his college, standing just within the door of the sleeping-room.

"What mean these shrieks and cries?" asked the warden.

"The meaning is plain enough, sir," said Graveboys, and, if you will return to your lodgings, I will join you so soon as I shall have given a dose of medicine to this suffering man, who is, at present, labouring under the effects of phrenzy."

Dr. Brent bowed—so humbly that Hugh imagined he could not know Graveboys as a mere quack-salver—and left the room. Graveboys took a small phial from the folds of his dress, poured out a few drops from it into a glass of water, and, with Hugh's assistance, administered the dose to Gilbert Dynes.

"See its immediate efficacy:" said Aaron; "you may release your hold. He will sleep calmly for some hours. I will leave the phial with you, Hugh de Mohun, under condition that you allow neither apothecary nor physician to examine its contents. If the violent symptoms occur again—ten drops, administered as you saw me administer

them just now, will prove efficacious. I must leave you now, as I have matters of great import to communicate to Dr. Brent," said Graveboys.

"But will you not see me again? bring you no news of my friends in the West?" asked Hugh, seeing Graveboys preparing to leave the room.

"I have none—I cannot tarry now—I am not mine own master. But do not seek to detain me; to-morrow, or I am mistaken, will bring an old ally of yours hither, with packets from Dunster and Luxborough. We shall meet again ere long, and, as I have said before, forget not the token—now, farewell."

Graveboys, as he spoke these words, shook Hugh's hand cordially, and hurried from the room.

Gilbert Dynes slept calmly through the night, leaving Hugh de Mohun at leisure to think over this strange, but timely, meeting with the mediciner, and to ponder on the nature of the business which could have made him a guest, and evidently a respected guest, of the proud Warden of Merton College.

CHAPTER XVI.

EARLY in the morning, Hugh was relieved from his office of watcher by Perkin Doyle, to whom he transferred the phial left him by Graveboys with directions how to administer its contents. He then sought his bed, and was soon in a deep sleep, from which he did not wake until late in the day.

He rose and took a hurried meal as he dressed himself, and, having ascertained from Doyle that his tutor was still calmly sleeping from the effects of the drug, was about to go to the trenches in search of Anthony Wood, when it occurred to him that he ought first to enquire if the mediciner were still at the Warden's lodgings, or had left without seeking further converse with him.

He went to the lodgings and enquired if Dr. Graveboys was within.

"Who? sir," enquired the servant, "I know no one of that name."

"I mean the person—the gentleman—who was with Dr. Brent last night, and with whom, about midnight, he visited the Dean, Mr. Gilbert Dynes", said Hugh.

"You must have been dreaming," said the servant civilly, but smiling in a peculiar way; "my master retired to bed before great Tom had tolled ten and no one, to my knowledge, either entered or left the lodgings after that hour."

"I might have believed that his appearance in Mr. Dynes' rooms was a dream, had not Dr. Graveboys administered a medicine to the invalid at a most seasonable time and left with me a phial containing the sleeping mixture, and which I have handed over to Perkin Doyle," said Hugh.

"I can only repeat, sir, that, no one to my knowledge, either entered or left the lodgings of the Warden after the clock had struck ten. You had better question the gate-porter," said the servant.

Hugh adopted his suggestion; but the porter was certain that no one had been admitted into, or left, the College after the gates were closed at a few minutes after nine.

"It is strange," said Hugh to himself, "I have a great mind to ask Dr. Brent himself for an explanation, but perhaps I had better not, as my inquiries might prove in some way injurious to Grave-boys."

"Will it please you to buy the new paper, called the *Mercurius Aulicus*, or Court Mercury? It contains much that is worthy of being known," said a man dressed as a pedlar and bearing a packet of papers under his arm and a box fitted for carrying wares of every and any description at his back.

"Nay, my friend—I have neither time nor money to expend on such matters," said Hugh, hurrying past the man without looking at him.

"I have news from the West, young sir," continued the pedlar following Hugh, "news that the student of Dunster would be sorry not to hear," he added in a low voice, as he reached a part of Merton lane which he deemed to be sufficiently distant from the college to prevent his words reaching the porter's ears.

Hugh looked hard at the pedlar, and by his laughing face and blue eyes recognized Giles Tudball, who significantly touched his lips with his finger to caution him to be careful.

"Buy a paper—buy a paper, sir : it will repay the groat you expend upon it by its important news," said Giles in the tone usually adopted by those who traded in pedlery.

"Well—give me one, my good man," said Hugh, as if he was addressing a stranger, "there is your money," and, as he placed the coin in his hand, he whispered, "come back with me to my rooms."

"Not so," replied Giles, as he pretended to be shewing the wares in his box "but come you in half an hour's time to the Blue Boar Inn, not far hence. I will apprize the host of the coming of a customer, and he will shew you to my apartment."

Hugh took the *Mercurius Aulicus* and returned to his rooms, to spend the half hour which was to pass before he was admitted to a further interview with Giles Tudball in reading its contents.

The brief account it contained of the proceedings of the king's party in the North, and the preparations making by the parliament, in London, would,

at any other time, have afforded Hugh much entertainment; but so anxious was he to know the tidings which, he doubted not, Giles had brought from Dunster and Luxborough, that the words he read conveyed no meaning to his mind. Even the name of Pym, which was more than once inserted in capital letters, failed to induce him to read the speeches made in the house of commons by one in whom he felt so greatly interested.

As soon as the time named by Giles was expired, Hugh hurried up Blue-Boar lane, and was met at the door of the little inn by its owner, who, touching his cap to him, without saying a word, preceded him through a winding passage, and led him up a back staircase to the room in which Giles was expecting him.

"Safe bind, safe find," said Giles; "walls they say have ears, and I know that hosts and inn servants are not deficient in, or backward in making use of, those organs. Now the bolt of the outer door is secured and we are secure, to Hugh de Mohun I am Giles Tudball again. Give me thine hand and a hearty squeeze of it, as you were wont

to do of old ; for, to tell you the truth, I have been afraid to grip hands lately with any one, lest in a seeming friend I should meet with a foe."

Hugh returned the hearty grip of Giles with such interest as brought tears into his eyes, and caused him to tell Hugh that the quiet life he had led at Oxford had not diminished the strength of his sinews.

"To your news, Giles," said Hugh, smiling at the effect of his warm reception of his old ally. "I am all impatient to hear how my kind friends in the West fare."

"All in good time," said Giles, "first let us pledge each other in a goblet of this spiced wine, and then question me until three of the clock, at which hour I must be on my road again, and I will reply to you as far as my knowledge will serve me."

"Now give me the packet from Dunster and the other from Luxborough," said Hugh after he had pledged Giles in a bumper, and drunk the king's health in a second, which emptied the tankard.

Giles loosed his close-fitting vest, and, after di-

ving deeply into a pocket which was so constructed as to lie beneath his arm, drew out a large black leathern book, and from one of the numerous pockets of it gave two letters to Hugh.

Hugh de Mohun opened them and found that one was from his friend Master Luttrell and the other from Mistress Luttrell.

"Have you not a third?" asked Hugh, looking the image of disappointment.

"I have not—read what you have and the contents will doubtless inform you why Mistress Everard has not communicated to you save through the medium of her guardian," said Giles, lighting his pipe to enable Hugh to peruse the despatches at his leisure.

"These be but unsatisfactory letters," said Hugh. "Master Luttrell gives me but a short account of his proceedings at Dunster, and those of a public nature, relating principally to the forces already collected in the royal cause in the West. Mistress Luttrell does but assure me of the health and happiness of all in whose welfare I am interested, and both of them refer me to you, Giles, for further information."

"If it be not contrary to the statutes of your University, light your pipe as you were wont to do on board the Blossom of Minehead. Then you shall question me, and I will reply between the puffs; but, before you commence your catechism, we will make our host replenish the cup," said Giles, as he unbarred the door and summoned the landlord.

"Now," said Giles, "I am all attention—but, before I say more, let me explain that the shortness of those missives of which you complain was owing to the suddenness with which I was compelled to journey inland."

"Tell me, then, did you see Mistress Everard at Luxborough? did she send any message to me?" said Hugh.

"I did see her; but it was in the presence of her friends, and she was satisfied with her guardian's assurances that she had apprized you of her being well."

Hugh sighed and was silent for a while.

"Come, cheer up man—do not be down-hearted because a letter falls short of your expectations:

you will no doubt hear again and that shortly, if an opportunity presents itself," said Giles.

"Does any immediate danger impend over my friends?" enquired Hugh.

"None; our party is too strong in the West to allow of the Puritans attacking so strong a hold as Dunster," said Giles.

"What brought you inland, then?" asked Hugh.

"I have been entrusted with dispatches from the Colonel to friends in London and elsewhere, all of which I have delivered safely. Moreover, I have been acting as a spy upon the enemy's movements, and have been forced to delay my journey to Oxford, on my way back to Minehead, for some days."

"Have you been in London and seen aught of my old friend and companion, Julian Bachell?"

"I have seen him: but, though I feared not, trusting to my disguise, to speak to Roger Pri-ver and the preacher in Master Pym's mansion, I did not dare to address myself to Julian Bachell, lest he should discover me," said Giles.

"He would have been glad to have discovered you, and you might have concerted with him a means

for his escape from the residence of his enemy, King Pym, as the roundhead knaves call him," said Hugh.

"That he would gladly have discovered me I doubt not, and I should never have been here to tell you of the fact," said Giles; "but as to enabling him to escape from Master Pym's house I think he would not have thanked me even for the suggestion."

"What mean you, Giles?" asked Hugh.

"Agatha Pym hath bright eyes and a fair skin, and young men are open to conviction," said Giles smiling. "Master Julian hath free ingress and egress, yet is he not willing to quit Derby house. Instead of the hat and feathers, which sat so jauntily upon his flowing locks of auburn hair, and the well-appointed dress that had used to set off his handsome figure, you may now see him dressed in a suit of sober brown, and his hair cropped as closely under his broad-brimmed unornamented beaver as that of Master Robert Browne himself, who, as he purchased of me an *Aulicus* containing the latest examination of Archbishop Laud, assured

me that 'the young man had found, and eaten of the true manna of righteousness.'"

"And Roger Priver—saw you him?"

"I did, but I should scarcely have recognized him; for my mate, Will Bowering, hath left his nose a mere wreck—it lieth so flat upon his face that, had he not been in attendance on the preacher as usual and uttered his usual 'how long? how long?' as an accompaniment to Master Browne's accustomed mode of expressing his impatience at Heaven for not visiting his enemies with condign punishment, I should not have known him," said Giles.

"And how fare my humble friends at Dunster and Minehead, Basil Chipera, and Master Quirke, and the Harbour-master and his son? tell me news of them Giles," said Hugh.

"Old Master Richard Luckes, the harbour-master, hath taken his last glass of grog. Mabel, having left the key in the spirit cupboard, while she tripped down to the quay to speak to the mate of the St. David, on her return found him dead in his chair and the brandy bottle empty by his side.

The rest are much as when you left them, except that Will Bowering lies more powerfully than ever, having had leisure to add to his stock of miraculous stories while he was under the apothecary's hands, to be cured of the pike-wound inflicted on him by Roger Priver, when the Dunster men attacked Cutcombe."

"And Basil Chipera? you have not told me of him," said Hugh.

"What with the wardenship of the castle gates, his attendance on the lemon tree, that groweth against the south wall of the castle, and a myrtle or two adjoining it, to which his favourite song is attached, he hath no time for any thing but to regret the death of good Master Snelling and the absence of Hugh de Mohun, his promising pupil."

"I believe, then, Giles, that I have no more to ask of you," said Hugh.

"What! not a word of my wife?—it is ungrateful of you, sir, considering the many excellent lectures she has read you about the impropriety of your student-life at Dunster, and the way in which you corrupted her worthy husband," said Giles.

"Oh—I trust dame Tudball is well and beg her

pardon for not having enquired after her. She certainly did not spare her tongue, Giles, nor her advice, which was, no doubt, intended to benefit both of us. You do not get lectured now for encouraging the Dunster student to leave his books for your boat, and his sober suit of grey for the seaman's dress purchased for him by Will Bowering," said Hugh.

"I hear but little on either subject—for, to tell you the truth, business keeps me a great deal from home—ahem!" said Giles, as he winked at Hugh.

"We will have one more bottle of spiced wine, if it be but to drink her health in it," said Hugh. "The good old soul deserves a better husband than she has I fear."

"She is advanced in years; nevertheless I will drink to her health while you indite a letter to your friends, who will expect an answer to their communications. Here are materials in my pack—there is ink—there be pens and here paper. Be concise, for my time is getting short, and I must reach Swindon before night," said Giles.

Hugh sat down and wrote a few lines to each of his friends at Dunster and Luxborough. In

his note to Mistress Luttrell he alluded to his intention of joining the army and not proceeding in his studies at Oxford, believing it to be a readier means of acquiring a name and fame than by entering into the Church, to which, as a profession, he had a strong objection. It will be scarcely necessary to say that Prudence Everard was not forgotten among the friends to whom he requested her to remember him.

"I had nearly forgotten the most important part of my errand to you," said Giles, as he placed the letters Hugh had given him in the black leathern pocket-book. "Master Luttrell bade me give you these ten golden jacobuses for your immediate supplies. I have carried them in fear and trembling and am glad to rid myself of them. It is but a short supply, Hugh, but the demands on Master Luttrell are heavy; a student's expenses are, I doubt not, heavy too, and—now don't look so hard at me with those black eyes of yours—if—in short, if you want any further supply to enable you to maintain your rank as a gentleman, *my* purse is open to you. Here it is—help yourself."

Hugh grasped Giles's hand and assured him that Master Luttrell's supply was more than adequate to his wants, and, seeing a shade of displeasure pass over Giles's brow, he promised him, if ever he stood in need of more than the allowance afforded him by his friend, he would freely apply to him for a loan.

"A loan, man, hang loans! I have no children, Hugh de Mohun, and don't be offended if I say I look upon you as a son. I am rich, though I do not choose that every fool should know it, and my purse is your's, let old mother Tudball say what she will."

"Giles, I thank you; I will not say more: I will not detain you from setting out on your homeward journey. Commend me to all my old friends. I must now see how my kind friend and tutor Gilbert Dynes fares. If it had not been for the opportune arrival of our old acquaintance Aaron Graveboys, last night, I fear he would ere this have been raving mad," said Hugh.

"Aaron Graveboys here last night?" said Giles, "impossible! You must have dreamed it."

"Why so?" said Hugh.

"He crossed over to Holland not long since with Master Jenkins in Master Luttrell's cutter," said Giles.

"He was with me last night and apprized me of your coming hither to-day—not by your name, but he told me that an old ally of mine would pay me a visit," said Hugh.

"I cannot see through that man's character," said Giles, "but rely upon this: he is not what he seems to be. Jansen, in his cups, told me as much, and I have reason to know that he has access to the highest quarters, and can command an audience of Royalty where others might petition for it in vain. Hugh de Mohun, farewell, and God bless you!"

CHAPTER XVII.

WHEN Giles Tudball had left him, Hugh de Mohun returned to college and sought his tutor's rooms. He found him still sleeping, and heard from Perkin Doyle that both the physician and the apothecary had been expressing themselves in indignant terms, because Hugh had interfered with their method of treating their patient by calling in the aid of an irregular practitioner.

"Never regard their indignation," said Hugh, "but persevere in the use of the mediciner's drug whenever there may be occasion for it. I will to the fortifications and seek Anthony, Wood and then return and relieve you of your watch."

Hugh had scarcely reached the back of University College, meaning to pass through Logic lane

into the High Street, when he met the boy bearing a bundle of all sorts of curiosities that he had collected in the trenches. He was, as usual, begrimed with mud and dirt, but, in addition to this, his clothes were torn in many places and his face showed marks of a recent fray, for it was besmeared with blood, and his eyelids and cheeks were much swollen.

"How now?" said Hugh, as he burst out into a violent fit of laughter, "how now, Anthony? hast been a bad boy and gotten a beating?"

"Would you believe it?" said the boy striking the ground with his stick. "Master Rallingson, boy though he be, forbade my being in the trenches, because, forsooth, I impeded the workmen in my search for valuable relics."

"And you resisted his authority, I presume," said Hugh.

"I denied his authority and went on with my searchings, as you may see by their fruits," said Wood, pointing to his bundle "but, unluckily, in scrambling for a spear-head I thrust myself between the legs of a worthy citizen and canted him into the trench upon his head."

"For which he punished you, doubtless," said Hugh, laughing more loudly than before.

"He did—by proxy for he liked not the look of this my faithful staff, which I brandished above his injured head when he threatened to strike me. He called upon his corporate officers to seize and remove me. They did so, but not without a struggle, as you see; but I count myself victorious, seeing that I bore away the *spolia opima*, the whole of my collection, excepting a valuable specimen of *cornu ammornis*, which I discharged at the mace-bearer's head to cause him to quit the hold he had taken of my bundle."

"Well fought," said Hugh "but now, exchange your clothes for a decent suit, indulge freely in the use of soap and water, and return with me to the trenches, for I would be in the open air until I return to college, to take my seat beside the sick-bed of Master Gilbert Dynes."

"I will not to the trenches again to-day—for Master mace-bearer, who was partly stunned by my missile, will, doubtless, be for appealing to the mayor, or the vice-chancellor, for redress, and I have no wish to see the inside of the city prison, or Ox-

ford Castle, under the warrant of either of them. But I will cleanse myself and change my clothes, and will show you many things and places which you have not yet seen."

"I will await you then, in my rooms, or, if you will not delay me long, I will walk up and down before your father's house," said Hugh.

"I will not detain you ten minutes," said the boy, as he entered the door and closed it behind him. He was as good as his word and, with the exception of his swollen cheek and eyelids, appeared again but little the worse for the affray in which he had been engaged.

"Now then, Master Hugh, follow me and I will shew you places worthy of being seen. Folks call me an idle good-for-nought, because I confine not my studies to books; and even Master John Mayland, the Archididasculus of the school in New College, accuses me of being *somno gravatus* when I am pondering on matters which he despises, because he is ignorant of them. I am thankful that certain parties have occupied the New College gardens, as their training ground, and so obtained an unlimited holiday for us boys, who preferred

seeing the sober citizens taught to trail pikes and use martial weapons, to learning Greek and Latin."

Hugh smiled kindly on the boy, who, with hasty steps, led him by the Blue Boar lane into Saint Aldate's at the top of which stood the conduit, called Carfax. As Hugh had frequently seen and admired the handsome structure, he would not stop to listen to Anthony's account of its founder and builder, and of its having been presented to Laud, the chancellor, as a nuisance, inasmuch as it obstructed the passage of vehicles and afforded a lounging spot to the usual occupants of Penniless Bench hard by.

"Nay an the conduit, though it be well supplied with fluid, be a dry subject to Master Hugh, we will on, and, passing down the Butcher-Row, pay a visit to yon noble tower," said Anthony, pointing to the old Castle.

"I will with you there gladly," said Hugh, "for I am anxious to inspect so noble and so ancient a structure."

"If these walls could speak," said Wood, as they entered a low archway leading into the tower, "they would tell us many a tale of woe. You

see that a captive would have but small chance of escaping through the strongly-barred openings formed in these walls, which are of solid masonry nine feet in thickness."

"It makes me shudder," said Hugh, "even to look upon them."

"And yet it was here that Offa, Alfred, Harold Harefoot, and others held their Saxon courts," said Anthony, "and in after times, there is good reason for believing that a college was formed here, under the wardenship of the canons of Osney Abbey. It is now used chiefly by *professors in arte surripiendi* under the wardenship of our friend the gaoler here; although he sometimes hath under his charge certain scholars of the University, who have chanced to offend against the statutes, and incurred the displeasure of the vice-chancellor."

"I would fain climb yonder mound of earth, which seems to have been reared for the purpose of overlooking the gloomy tower that we have just quitted," said Hugh.

"It would but ill repay you for the toil," said Anthony, "for the prospect it affords is not more extensive than that seen from the tower. It

contains a wide and deep well, by means of which the castle is supplied with water. Let us on to objects better worth our inspection."

"But tell me first," said Hugh, "by whom those buildings below the great tower are occupied."

"They are shortly to be garrisoned by the king's troops; at least, by so many of them as can conveniently be received within them, under the command of Colonel Legge, the Governor of the City. Preparations are already being made for their reception."

"Enough," said Hugh; "now lead on, for I see that you are waxing impatient."

"Give our guide a gratuity for his services, and follow me," said Anthony.

Hugh gave a trifle to the gaoler who had showed them over the tower, and followed the boy towards the river Isis, or rather a branch of it, which flowed immediately under the city walls. They crossed it by means of a bridge of stone, and, turning somewhat to the left, went through some small and rather wretched-looking buildings towards a tall tower, surrounded by the ruins of what had evidently been a large religious edifice.

"This spot," said Anthony, "is called the Hamel; yonder, on our right hand, stands the church of St. Thomas; beyond it once stood the Abbey of Osney. I have brought you hither to show you the remains of that noble building, now, alas! a mere mass of ruins."

"It must indeed have been a splendid structure," said Hugh as he gazed on the remains; "great, doubtless, was the piety of its founder."

"Ahem!" said Wood, with a peculiar look, "its founder, if report speak truly, was one Edith, a concubine of our first Henry, who, to atone for her sins and make her peace with Mother Church, induced Robert D'Oily, who made an honest woman of her by taking her to wife, to build a priory here for the Canons Augustines or Austin Canons. It afterwards became an abbey; but our eighth Harry, who interfered somewhat rudely in church matters, transferred the dean and his six prebendaries, with all their inferior officers, willy nilly, to the conventual church of St. Frideswide, which was metamorphosed into a cathedral, and stands, as you know, within the walls of King Henry's College, now called Christ-church."

"Were there not many more religious edifices in

and near Oxford which have shared the fate of this pile?" asked Hugh, as they walked from the spot.

"There were several: yonder, immediately before us, on the margin of the Isis, stand the remains of Rewley—a monastery built by Edward, Earl of Cornwall, for monks of the Cistercian order, who had it in charge to pray for the soul of his father Richard, king of the Romans. Then as to Friars, Oxford must have have swarmed with them; for there were the Austin Friars, or Friars Eremites of the order of St. Austin, who had their dwelling in Holywell or Holy Cross, where Wadham College now stands; The Dominican or Black Friars were located on an island, near the watergate, below the church of St. Ebbe; here also settled the Franciscan or Grey Friars: the Carmelite or White Friars took up their abode opposite to us, where Gloucester Hall stands, but Edward the Second, piously resigned for their use his palace of Beaumont, a little way beyond. The Crouched or Crossed Friars dwelt at the first near to Broadgate Hall, but afterwards removed near to St. Peter's church, in the east of the city. The

Friars de Sacco had their residence near to the Castle and western gate ; while the Trinitarians occupied a monastery built upon the spot where New College now stands."

"All pious men, doubtless," said Hugh.

"An they did what was required of them they could have had but little time for going astray, seeing that they were to attend service seven times in the twenty-four hours," said Anthony. "They began at two o'clock in the morning with their nocturnals ; then at six came the *matins*, at nine the *tierces*, at noon the *sext*, at three afternoon, the *none* ; *vespers* were at six and the *complins* soon after seven, when they were ordered to bed. As they had to get their meals and perform sundry private matters between services, you will agree with me that they had but little leisure for indulging in worldly amusements : but enough of this—the day is drawing to a close and it were as well for us to be within the city gates before they are shut for the night."

Hugh followed his guide, and they arrived just in time to enter the western gate before the warden, an officer appointed by the University, who claimed the right of watch and ward over the town, had

shut the portal. Having done his duty, he resigned the key to the party of soldiers, who, with the permission of the Vice-chancellor, were posted there as a guard.

Anthony Wood turned to the left down a narrow lane, immediately behind the church called St. Peter le Bailey, and about a hundred yards beyond the church pointed out to Hugh a small low building.

"Know you the name of this Hall? Master Mohun."

Hugh confessed his ignorance.

"This then, is called New Inn Hall: It is one of the many houses licensed to receive students who cannot gain admission into any of the colleges. The Latin name, as you may guess, is *Novum Hospitium*; with its *Principalis*, *Magistri*, *Bacalaurei*, *Communarii*, and *Famuli*, it holds but some thirty souls, nor should I have drawn your attention to it, had it not become a place of some importance, seeing that here the royal mint is located. Hither are brought the services of plate belonging to various colleges, to be coined into crowns, having a view of Oxford city under the *horse*, half-crowns, and other silver pieces. In gold they coin the *unité* worth

twenty shillings, the half *unité*, and the treble *unité* which, as its name imports, is worth three pounds: all these have for their legendum, "Exsurgat Deus; dissipentur inimici!"

"And who are employed in the coinage, citizens or strangers?" enquired Hugh.

"The citizens of Oxford make money it is true, Master Hugh; but by the exercise of their honest callings. The makers of money for King Charles were imported hither from Aberystwith and are skilful men."

"Have all the colleges shown their loyalty, by contributing to the necessities of their Royal Master?"

"All, it is reported, save the society called Jesus College. Men say that the Welshman who presides over that body has intimated a wish to have better security for the loan of the college bowls and flagons than the word of Charles Stuart. But forward, Hugh; follow me across the corn market, by St. Michael's church, and through the Turl towards Holywell street. I will obtain for you admission to a place but little known, and will shew you some things that

will doubtless excite your surprise, if not your admiration."

Anthony passed by Wadham College, and, a few yards below it, knocked at the door of a small house: his summons was not attended to.

"It is as I expected; the canting knaves be now at their secret exercises," said Wood; "I must e'en give their masonic tap."

After he had given two distinct raps and then three quick ones, the door was cautiously opened by an old woman, whose figure was so warped and twisted that it seemed wonderful how, even with the help of a crutch-headed stick, she was possessed of the power of locomotion.

"How now, Bess Hampton, are the faithful to be shut out from the hearing of the pure gospel truths? Here have I and my friend here been kept waiting until, doubtless, much edifying discourse is totally lost to us. Down with the chain and admit us," said Anthony.

"I will admit you, Master Anthony, because I have been bidden to do so by that precious young man, Master Parker of Wadham, who hopes to save you from the dangers which beset your

soul from the doctrines of papists and prelatists; but I will not admit yon tall student without the sign and the pass-word," said the old woman.

"Look, then, that your laundry pass not into other hands. This is a student and a post-master of Merton, under which you rent this house. We are not here to betray the secrets of the place if you admit us peaceably: we would merely see how the Gruellers spend the time which the Ungodly waste over the bowl and the wine-cup. Down chain, Bess, and I will hold myself responsible for your security; refuse us admittance and I will reveal to Mr. Vice-Chancellor sufficient to ensure you a berth in the castle and your Gruellers a passport from the University."

The old laundress hesitated for a time, but, at last, grinning maliciously at the boy, dropped the chain and admitted him and Hugh de Mohun.

"Now, Master Hugh, do you hear, see, and say nothing. Follow my example in all things and fear no harm," said Anthony, as he led the way up a dark staircase into a long room at the back of the house. Before they arrived at the top of the

staircase, Hugh could hear a deep, sonorous voice employed in offering up a prayer. When he entered the room, he saw some half-score of young men kneeling on the ground round a deal table. Anthony walked stealthily within the door and knelt down among the rest, an example which Hugh immediately followed. When the prayer was ended, the company rose to their feet, and then took their seats on benches placed along the walls. One of them, who seemed to be many years older than his companions, placed a chair at the end of the table, which he mounted and used as a pulpit. His discourse, with which we will not trouble our readers further than to say that it consisted of a violent tirade against popery and prelacy, and abuse of Laud and the high-church party in the University, lasted somewhat more than an hour, and was ended by a prayer that the Almighty would be pleased to bless the efforts of Pym and the Parliament and to relieve the people from a ritual and ceremonies which savoured of papistry and idolatry.

When the discourse and prayer were ended, the whole party drew their benches up to the table and took their seats. The Preacher clapped his

hands together in a peculiar way, and Bess Hampton sidled into the room, followed by two sour-looking crones, who bore each of them a tray containing a number of basins, one of which was taken by each of the party. Hugh followed the example set him by Anthony and accepted the basin which was offered to him: he was about to test its contents but Wood laid his hand upon his arm, a motion that was fully explained when the preacher rose and uttered a prolonged grace.

“Now fall to, Master Hugh, and if you can relish the mess, drain your bowl to the dregs: it will do much to raise you in the opinion of precious Master Parker,” whispered Anthony.

Hugh raised the basin to his lips, but, when he found that it contained nothing but oatmeal boiled in water, he set it down again and watched, with some curiosity, to see whether his companions would do justice to the nauseous draught. The bowls were speedily drained, and the younger members left the room, silently saluting Hugh as they passed him, but Parker stopped to exchange a few words with Anthony Wood, who introduced Hugh de Mohun to him as a student of Merton, and at

present wanting guidance and tuition, seeing that Master Gilbert Dynes was incapacitated by sickness from attending to his duties.

Parker shook Hugh by the hand, and expressed a hope that he would be a constant attendant at their meetings. Hugh bowed, and, as soon as the door had closed behind Parker, the boy burst out into a fit of laughter, and begged of Hugh to drink the health of his new friend in the delicious beverage before him.

“This is no joking matter, Master Anthony: I have impatiently listened to more disloyalty and profane speaking than I thought to hear in the course of my life. If Gilbert Dynes were not ill, I should feel it my duty to expose the matter to him—”

“And get me into a serious scrape,” said Wood. “But do you keep silence on the subject for my sake: the party is but a small one and consequently harmless for evil. Let us go—faugh! how the place stinketh of oatmeal! I am not given to the beer-can or the wine-pot, but I do hold the exchanging of them for this filthy mixture most treasonable.”

Thus speaking, the boy took his basin and discharged its contents into the fire-place: then, bidding Hugh follow him, he rushed down the stairs and made the best of his way home.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HUGH de Mohun found the gates of Merton closed, but easily obtained an entrance to the college by the way that Anthony Wood had shewn him over the walls. He had scarcely alighted on the ground, however, when he felt a hand laid on his shoulder.

"Unhand me," said Hugh "whoever you be or take the consequences."

"The consequences of climbing into College thus unlawfully would be expulsion from its walls or rustication at the least, if Dr. Brent had witnessed Master de Mohun's agility instead of his servant," said Perkin Doyle. "Here have I, relying on your promise to return and relieve me of my watching over our dean, been well-nigh stifled and starved to boot."

"I have been absent longer than I intended, but Master Anthony Wood has been shewing me the objects best worth seeing near and around Oxford," said Hugh.

"It must have been by torch-light then, for the sun has been down these two hours. But now, sir, I would pray you to partake of your supper which is set out in your apartments and so allow me to join my family."

Hugh hastily partook of what was prepared for him and relieved Perkin by taking his seat beside the sick man's bed. Gilbert Dynes was still under the influence of Graveboys' draught, but his breathing was more composed and his pulse calmer. He disturbed Hugh, who was passing the time away in reading, some three or four times during the night, by moaning and uttering short sentences, from which the pupil could clearly learn that the sleeping thoughts of the tutor were engaged on the subject nearest to his heart, the insult offered to his church of St Cross.

Morning, however, dawned, and, as the chamber felt heated, Hugh, as gently as he could, opened

the casement and admitted the fresh air. As he leaned out of the window, he fancied that he heard the sound of voices not far from him. He endeavoured to get a sight of the speakers, but a high wall intervened and shut them from his view. He waited patiently for a few minutes, and, by raising himself on the sill of the window, looked over into the groves, when he saw Dr. Brent, the Warden, walking with a man in whom he recognized Parker, of Wadham, the president of the society of Gruelers, whom he had visited the previous night.

The warning of the Prince of Wales recurred to his mind, and he resolved to be on his guard against Dr. Brent, of whose disloyalty and disaffection to the established religion he was justified in being suspicious, after seeing him in colloquy with so bold an innovator as Parker.

He watched them as long as he could and saw them shake hands on parting. Parker went down by the meadows leading to the Cherwell, and Dr. Brent returned under Merton wall, in which direction, a few minutes afterwards, Hugh heard a door closed and bolted.

When Perkin Doyle came to relieve Hugh de Mohun, the latter told him what he had seen and heard, and of his visit to the 'Gruellers.'

"Take the advice, sir, of one humble as I am, and keep silent on the subject to every body: the times are out of joint, and many men that were deemed true are found to be false. There are agents both of the loyalists and the parliament men, busy in securing partizans, and, if report is to be believed, the Jesuits are not idle, but have their agents here among us even as members of the University. I am sorry that you followed that half-demented boy, Wood, to Bess Hampton's, it may lead you into trouble. But see, Master Dynes is waking, and I would not that he should hear us talking on such matters."

Dynes awoke, and expressed himself in a grateful manner to Hugh and his servant for the care and attention that they had shown him. He said he felt well enough to rise, and made an attempt to do so, but failed from sheer weakness. Hugh begged of him to forego any exertion for the present, and, having left him under the care of Doyle,

went to his own rooms, and sought the refreshment of sleep which he so greatly needed.

The sun was high in the heavens when he was roused by the porter of the college, who placed in his hands a packet that had been left for him at the gate. He opened it and found, in a hand-writing which he recognized to be Wood's, these words, "Your visit to Bess is known to the Warden: be on your guard, own that you were there if questioned on the subject, and make what excuse you best can. Do not involve me in the scrape, or my prospects of entering Merton may be blighted."

"Does any one wait?" enquired Hugh.

"No one, sir; the packet was left by a ragged urchin, who said that he had been paid to place it in my hands, and who ran away as soon as he had done so," replied the porter as he left the room.

Hugh rose and dressed himself, and, while he was eating the meal which Perkin Doyle, who, like a good college servant, was never forgetful of his master's wants as far as meat and drink went, had set out for him, a message was delivered to him that the Warden would be glad to see

him and to ascertain from him the true state of the dean's health.

Hugh put on his academical dress, and followed the bearer of the message to the Warden's lodgings. He was ushered into his library, where he found him sitting busily employed over a huge volume of Old Divinity. He did not disturb him, but walked up to a window that commanded a view of Merton fields, and amused himself by viewing the meadows of Christ Church and the meandering streams of Isis and Cherwell, now covered with boats. He had stood thus many minutes, when the Warden, apologizing for having left him to himself while he finished an interesting chapter, motioned him to take a seat.

Hugh obeyed and to the Warden's enquiries as to the state of Gilbert Dynes' health gave such replies as he was enabled to do. A silence of some minutes then occurred, an interval which the Warden employed in playing with the fur-edged gown in which he was enveloped.

Hugh rose and was about to leave the room, under the notion that the Warden had nothing more to say to him. Dr. Brent, however, waved his hand

as a signal to him to resume his seat. Hugh sat down again, and the Warden, with a little embarrassment of manner and tone, questioned him fully as to his past life, his abode at Dunster, and the nature of his studies under Master Robert Snel-ling.

To all these questions Hugh answered frankly and fully. Another interval of silence then occurred, and Hugh was again about to rise and retire, but was again waved into his chair.

"Hugh de Mohun," said the Warden "you are young and are here in dangerous times: I would have you be on your guard, and not make yourself a party-man by joining in any of the meetings which are held by persons of all shades of thinking. Keep yourself free and unshackled until maturer years shall have ripened your judgment."

Hugh bowed.

"I am right, I trust, in supposing that Master Luttrell's protégé has not even visited any of these secret societies which meet in favour of the king or the parliament," said Dr. Brent.

"I was unwittingly a visitor at one of them last night," said Hugh.

"If it may be said—who was your introducer?" asked the Warden.

"It may not be said," replied Hugh. "I trust you will pardon me if I say no more than that I was conducted to the house of Bess Hampton by a friend, and witnessed the proceedings of a small party, who call themselves or are called by others, in derision probably, the Gruellers."

"And you heard—"

"That which, with your permission, sir, I will not reveal. I consider it a point of honour not to expose matters that reached my knowledge without the permission of the parties to whom I was introduced in a way somewhat unexpectedly," said Hugh.

"I commend you for your caution, de Mohun, but as your Warden and as it were guardian according to your friend Master Luttrell's wishes, I think I might claim a little more confidence on your part. But adieu, we shall know one another better shortly I trust. Farewell and remember in the mean while to be true to the good cause," said Doctor Brent, laying a stress on the last words and shaking Hugh warmly by the hand.

"The good cause?" said Hugh, as he walked to his rooms. "It would puzzle wiser brains than mine to find out which of the two great causes Dr. Brent accounts the good one. I am a loyal subject however, and as such shall be true to what I deem to be the good cause—my king and my Church. I thank Master Anthony for having given me the hint he did, or I should most assuredly have been entrapped."

"I am glad that you are returned, sir," said Perkin Doyle, as Hugh entered his rooms.

"Why so? I trust the dean is no worse."

"He is sleeping as calmly as an infant. The medicine though it be prescribed by a quack has a truly marvellous effect," said Perkin.

"But why are you glad at my return to my rooms, from which I have been absent but a short half hour?"

"Because Master Parker of Wadham has been here to seek you, for no good purpose I think, seeing that he is not loyally affected. Some one, too, now waits in the porter's lodge, who has orders to conduct you to the Blue Boar inn to a stranger recently arrived there."

Hugh threw off his cap and gown, and taking up his hat went to the lodge, where he found the tapster's boy. He followed him to the inn and through the house up to the back apartments, where to his great surprise he found Jansen and Graveboys.

"You may leave us Jansen to seek the drugs we stand in need of; and do you Master Hugh de Mohun learn to disguise your feelings better—I can read in your looks that you are surprised to see me here when you thought me far away," said Graveboys.

"You have read my looks aright," said Hugh.

"Wonder at nothing in these times; but tell me, and tell me truly, why I have been so long waiting for the interview which I sought with you."

Hugh said that he had been detained for some time in the library of Dr. Brent who had sent for him on particular matters.

"Oblige me by informing me what those matters were," said Graveboys.

These words were simple enough in themselves, but the tone in which they were spoken seemed

to be more peremptory than Hugh deemed an inferior ought to make use of to him. He therefore briefly answered that they were entirely of a private nature and concerned no one but the Warden and himself.

“Nay, you need not to snuff the air as proudly as a war-horse preparing for the battle: I meant no offence. Since you are unwilling to be communicative to me on a matter already bruited abroad, I will tell you that Dr. Brent, having been duly informed of your visit to a nest of puritanical and disaffected persons, has questioned you there-anent and bidden you not to forget the good cause,” said Graveboys smiling.

Hugh was amazed at his words and shewed his amazement in his looks.

“There again now—you will make but a bad courtier, young sir, if you cannot conceal your feelings more effectually. You must learn to dissemble or the hopes we entertain of you may be defeated,” said Graveboys.

“I hate deception, and know not what hopes we may entertain of me,” said Hugh scornfully; “I

cannot understand by what right a mediciner who hath—”

“Performed certain kind acts, you would say—but never mind; my time is short and I must not waste it in bandying words with a young man who is too hasty to hear what a friend would say to him.”

“Say on—I am justly rebuked, yet I cannot understand—”

“Be content to remain in the dark for a while. Listen to me, Hugh de Mohun; it is for the interest of the good cause—the cause of your king and country that you join yourself with Parker and his friends. Hear, see, and report every thing that passes among them to those whom it may advantage to know it. We have long wished for a spy upon their proceedings, and I feel grateful that chance, in the shape of young Anthony Wood, has provided us with one upon whom we may rely.”

“Dr. Graveboys, I give you to know that I will not be a spy upon any one’s proceedings, neither will I associate myself with men whose opinions I despise and detest,” said Hugh. “I cannot

understand by what right—your services to me as a mediciner having been recompensed as you confessed—you propose to me to act in a manner so inconsistent with the character of a man and a gentleman.”

“Will it please Master Hugh de Mohun to peruse this scrap of parchment?” said Graveboys, and he smiled as he placed it in the young man’s hands.

Hugh received it reluctantly, but when he had unfolded it and read it, the expression of his face and his manner were entirely changed.

“How got you this?” he asked.

“From the writer; be pleased to read it to me,” said Graveboys.

Hugh obeyed and read these few words—

“The companion of Master Langley is requested to follow the advice of Dr. Aaron Graveboys in all matters, even to the verge of apparent dishonour. He is moreover requested not to forget to secure for Master Langley a certain gaze-hound on which he hath set his affections.”

“It is signed C. S., is it not?” said Graveboys.

“It is—and doubtless written by the prince of—”

“Master Langley—but read this also, it is writ-

ten in a hand with which Hugh de Mohun is better acquainted than that of the—Master Langley.”

Hugh read nearly to the same effect, a letter written in the well-known hand of Mistress Luttrell, but instead of a request to secure a gaze-hound, the close of the note contained an intimation that his submission to Dr. Graveboys’ advice and guidance would please one Prudence Everard.

“You are satisfied I trust and will no longer refuse to listen to my suggestions,” said Graveboys.

“I am not satisfied, neither will I listen to any suggestions that tend to lead me to dishonour. The documents may be forged, or exacted from a mere child and a weak woman by some designing person,” said Hugh.

“This to me, sirrah!—you know not to whom you—but go—you are a silly boy and I pardon you; but remember this, you are watched, closely watched, and every word and action of yours will be reported to me,” said Graveboys. “You will do well to reconsider this matter or the hopes you entertain of making for yourself a name and fortune worthy the acceptance of Prudence Ever-

ard may be thwarted ; I now bid you farewell—when Parker—precious Parker, as the knaves call him, visits you again, admit him, worm out his secrets, learn the plans of his party and communicate them to me.”

“Never,” cried Hugh indignantly, “I would die sooner than act so base a part.”

“Enough, young man, you may leave me. Jansen is returning—but recollect this, that in matters of deep moment the end justifies the means, however dishonourable those means may appear to one but little versed in the intrigues of courts and the plans of Princes. You may leave me.”

Hugh gazed at the speaker and was vexed when he felt his eyes quail beneath the steady gaze with which he regarded him. He obeyed mechanically as it were, a wave of the hand, and left the room in a state of bewilderment. Before he had reached his college, however, his indignation was so great at the manner in which he had been treated by the mediciner, that he turned and rushed back to demand of him who and what he was who had assumed a right to treat him as he had done. Hastily as he retraced his steps, his

movements were slower than those of Graveboys, for, when he reached the room in which the colloquy had taken place, it was deserted, nor could any one inform him how or when its occupant had left it.

The thoughts to which this interview gave rise occupied Hugh's mind for some weeks.

Parker of Wadham, however, did not repeat his visit, probably because Dr. Brent had suggested to him that the time had not yet arrived for making a youth, educated by so sound a churchman and so zealous a loyalist as Robert Snelling, a convert to his views political and religious.

But little of moment passed in Oxford for some time, except that the defences of the city were completed, and chiefly by the young men, who, when term commenced and they returned to their studies, found the University in such a state of confusion that they threw aside their books, and enlisted themselves in a regiment which was raised by the authorities of the place. Among them Hugh de Mohun was conspicuous for his handsome person, his excellence in all martial exercises, and his great zeal and devotion to the royal cause.

While attending to his military duties, Hugh did not neglect his studies, but persevered in the acquirement of the Continental languages as soon as Dynes was convalescent and able to resume his duties as his tutor. In Gilbert Dynes a great change had been wrought. He resigned his church of the Holy Cross to another, appeared to be wholly unconcerned with the progress of public events and, with the exception of devoting an hour or so daily to the tuition of Hugh de Mohun, took no pains to perform his office of public tutor. His days and the greater part of his nights were spent in reading ponderous tomes, but of their nature and contents his pupil could not judge, as they were invariably closed and carried into the sleeping-room when he made his appearance.

Hugh was aware too, from the proximity of his apartments to those of Dynes, that he was visited nightly by a person unknown to himself and to Perkin Doyle, whom he questioned on the subject. This mysterious visiter, who was closely muffled up in a foreign garb, entered the college after it was dusk, and left it just before the gates were

closed for the night. Dynes never alluded to his visits; nor did Hugh, although it must be confessed he was curious to know the man and the purport of his coming, feel himself justified in alluding to the matter.

END OF VOL II.



DUNSTER CASTLE,

AN

HISTORICAL

ROMANCE OF THE GREAT REBELLION.

BY

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DUNSTER CASTLE.

CHAPTER I.

WE must now leave Oxford for a time and turn our thoughts on a rather important character in this narrative, who has not recently appeared on the scene.

In a temporary stand, covered with hangings of plain canvass, which had been erected near to the entrance of the House of Commons for the purpose of giving an opportunity to such families of the members as wished it, to see their relatives enter and leave the house, stood a group of four persons. One of them was a handsome youth with light hair whose locks had been shorn of their fair proportions and been cropped somewhat closely. He wore a dress of sober material, in fashion like those worn by the Parliamentarians or Puritans as they were more commonly called. His hat was

peaked in the crown and had broad brims to it, but it was set rather jauntily on one side, as if the wearer had been used to the Spanish hat and feathers worn by the royalists.

By the side of this young man, and leaning on his arms stood two ladies. The elder of the two appeared somewhat advanced in years and pale and thin as if from recent illness. The younger was a beautiful fair girl apparently about nineteen years of age. Both of them were dressed in sad-coloured silks, the material of which was costly, but the fashion, prim and precise as that worn by the Quakers in our time, differed essentially from the prevailing mode adopted by the ladies of the court. The fourth was a boy about fifteen years old, who, dressed in the severest style of his party, gave frequent offence to his companions, especially the elder lady, by the vivacity of his manner and the loudness of his remarks and laughter.

"I heartily wish the house was up," said the boy, "for it is near to high noon and I am hungry and wearied with waiting to see this Scottish deputation, of which my father talketh so much, leave St. Stephen's. But see, mother, see—do look

Julian and Agatha: if Master Alderman there be not going to get up on the wrong side of his horse, my name is not Willy Pym. Hah! hah! hah! do look how vainly his serving-groom tugs at his cloak to put him right, he will have him down—he will have him down! said I not so? hah! hah! hah! Master Alderman's head will now prove which is hardest, itself or the pebble stones of the good city of Westminster."

"Silence, Willy, I entreat of you. You draw the attention of the crowd upon us by your most unseemly mirth," said his mother.

"I cannot help it—see how he struggles and kicks on the ground, and how his horse looks down upon as if to ask him how he came there! Hah! hah! hah! good Master Alderman stick to your counter in Eastcheap for the future."

"Hush, brother, hush," said Agatha, "you give offence to our mother."

"Even Master Julian cannot help smiling, although he tries to look as severely as my father in his worst moments—can you Julian? do laugh outright, it becomes you so much better than looking solemnly and sourly. Look how Master Al-

derman is shaking himself and his plumed hat—he sets up for a cavaliero forsooth. Well done, Sir Cavaliero!” shouted the boy.

The word was instantly caught up by the crowd beneath the stand, and in a few seconds, the alderman, now mounted on his quiet beast, with four stout apprentices by his side, was surrounded by a mob of persons who not only seemed disposed to jeer him but to offer violence to his person.

“As I live, there will be mischief if not murder done and all through this boy’s folly!” said Julian Bachell. “I will among them and rescue the citizens, who, by my faith, lay about them soundly enough.”

“Well fought, flat caps!” shouted the young Pym, and clapped his hands with delight as several of the mob fell under the blows of the apprentices.

“They will be murdered if some one does not interfere for them—Here, boy, do you stand by your mother and sister, while I see what may be done,” said Julian.

“Nay, do not leave us,” cried the ladies, clinging to his arms. “They merely sport with them.”

"Bravo! well-aimed," cried the boy, as a large stone struck the Alderman on the head and would have rolled him from his horse had not his followers caught and supported him.

"I will be back immediately," said Julian, as he released himself from the ladies,—sprang over the front of the gallery and rushed to the citizen's side. He might have found it difficult to make his way through the dense crowd, had not some ten or twelve gentlemen who had been standing near to the stage and heard his remarks, joined him in the rush and so forced their way through: to draw and surround the alderman was the work of a moment. The crowd drew back at the sight of cold steel, but would perhaps have recovered their panic and attacked the gentlemen, had not the sergeant at arms, followed by a body of pikemen and many of the members of the house, made their appearance.

"Hurrah for Pym and the Parliament and down with the Papists!" shouted the mob as they fell back.

"Smite them hip and thigh, the Lord hath given them into your hands," screamed a tall trooper

with what had been a long nose but which was now nearly flattened to his face as if by a powerful blow.

"To your tents, O Israel! how long, how long?" cried a little man in a Geneva hat and cloak and with a large brass-clasped bible under his arm.

"Silence Roger Priver! Master Browne such conduct in a preacher is unseemly: stand back there, and Master Serjeant-at-arms do you and a part of your forces see yonder citizen in safety to the river where he had better provide for his security by taking boat eastward."

Pym, Hampden, and others who were well known to the crowd addressed them on the folly and cowardice of their conduct, and peace was quickly restored. A few minutes afterwards the deputation from the Scottish church made its appearance, with a body of English members following it, and the alderman was forgotten amongst the shouts of joy that greeted them as they passed on their way to the village of Charing.

Julian, who had withdrawn from the press on the interference of the serjeant-at-arms, with

the intention of joining the ladies in the stand, felt himself arrested by one of the gentlemen who had drawn with himself in defence of the alderman.

"I would say one word with you, sir, ere we part," said the gentleman.

"Speak, then, and fear not that any one can hear you but myself in this unseemly uproar," said Julian.

"A little further apart from eaves-droppers, if it so please you."

Julian obeyed and followed the stranger to the back of the stage.

"You are, if I am not mistaken, one of the household of Master Pym," said the stranger in a whisper.

"I am not one of his household; but I call him my friend and dwell with him at present," replied Julian.

"I would not have believed it, had I not heard it with my own ears. The son of a Bachell of Ashley-Combe unblushingly calls a rebel—the leader of rebels—his friend!" said the stranger.

Julian's colour rose to his cheeks and he meditated a haughty reply, but the stranger, eyeing him piteously, sighed and said—

“It is enough—if Julian Bachell can call the man who wounded his father and took himself prisoner, a friend, then may Charles Stuart look for disloyalty where least he expects to find it.”

“I know not who you may be that thus take it upon yourself to censure my conduct and I give you to know—”

“Enough, Master Bachell, I am not here to bandy words or exchange blows with such as you: I have a packet, here, must be delivered safely into the hands of Master Pym. To you I entrust it and command you to deliver it speedily and unperused. To think that the preference shown by a fair girl to one of obscure birth should have caused the true, the sole, remnant of the house of Bachell to desert his principles and own himself the friend of a disloyal man and a puritan!”

So saying, the stranger lifted his hat slightly from his brow, and before Julian could reply he had

disappeared from his view and mingled with the crowd.

Julian stood abashed and confounded: the allusion to Hugh de Mohun and Prudence Everard was not to be mistaken, and hurt his pride. The accusation of having deserted the principles in which he had been educated and with which his father had in many letters taunted him, caused him to feel the blush of shame rise painfully to his cheek. Irritated and vexed beyond endurance he was about to fling the packet from him; but the notion that, by accepting it, he had undertaken the task of its safe delivery, and a hope that it might contain matters of import to Pym and the party, whose side he had, after much struggling, thought of espousing, caused him to conceal it within his vest before he returned to the party whom he had left.

“Julian, dearest Julian, where have you been?” said Agatha Pym, “my mother has been sick at heart lest some evil should have befallen you. My father and brother are gone in search of you?”

“I did but tarry for a few moments to receive

a packet from a person who intreated me to deliver it to your father," said Julian: "here he comes most opportunely and his son with him."

Pym rode up to the spot where his wife and daughter were standing, and, smiling at Julian bade him conduct them to their coach, which was waiting for them near the abbey. In a few moments they were seated, and, preceded by Pym and his son, guarded, as he had been obliged to be of late by some ten or twelve men, who like their master were mounted on powerful Flanders' horses, they arrived at Derby House as speedily as the state of the roads would allow them.

As soon as the party had entered the house, Pym rebuked his son severely for having caused by his ill-timed pleasantry the attack that had been made on the alderman. He also applauded Julian for the part he had taken in having endeavoured to save the citizen from the consequences of his son's rashness.

"Master Julian fought among the royalists, and like a Royalist," said the boy: "but that he wanted the hat and plume and ruffled garments, it would

have been difficult to have distinguished him from them."

"Leave the room, boy," said Pym, "and seek Master Browne. Bid him set you such a task as shall teach you to control your unruly member."

"Nay, if he can control unruly members, why not make him chaplain to the House of Commons?" said the boy as he left the room.

"That youth must be removed from his mother, who spoils him. Yet how can I ask her to part with the only one left of many sons who have been taken from her by Him who gave them?" said Pym.

"May I ask," said Julian, "the name of the citizen in whose behalf I hastily drew this morning."

"His name is Chaloner," said Pym; "he is hostile, most hostile to our cause, and is constantly seen in the Commons' house with one of its members, Master Edward Waller, who is brother-in-law to one Tomkins, an officer in the household of the Papist Queen. I doubt his end will not be peaceable."

"Excuse me a moment, Master Pym," said

Julian, looking on the ground and blushing, but you speak to me of *our* cause, although you must be aware that I have not as yet pledged myself to join it."

"Nor will I exact that pledge from you; I will leave it to time, circumstances, and other chances over which man has no control, to convince you that we have both the right and the might on our side."

"I would not have broached the subject now," said Julian, "had I not been taunted this very day with having deserted my father and the principles of my family, and associated myself with rebels and disloyal persons."

"And who was it who dared thus to reproach you?" enquired Pym.

"I knew him not, though his voice was not unfamiliar to me. He bade me, however, nay commanded me, to deliver this packet safely and in an unopened state into your hands," said Julian.

"To the honorable John Pym, Esq., a courteous address truly—but written in characters to which I am an utter stranger. Ah! what means this insolence? but you shall hear and judge

if the contents be not over-rude," said Pym as he read thus :

" Mr. Pym,

' Do not think that a Guard of Men can protect you, if you persist in your traitorous Courses and wicked Designs. I have sent a Paper-Messenger to you, and if this do not touch your Heart, a Dagger shall, so soon as I am recovered of my Plague-sore. In the mean time you may be forborn because no better Man may be endangered for you,

REPENT TRAYTOR.

" How was the bearer of this insolent, menacing note dressed ?"

" In a grey cloak," said Julian, "somewhat plainer and less ornamented than those worn by court flutterers, but otherwise he had the outward appearance of a cavalier and a gentleman. In figure he was something below the ordinary height of man, and stout withal."

" Well—for his threats, I despise them—but I thank him for putting me on my guard. Here is another letter and writ by a different hand it may

contain an antidote for the poisonous nature of the other by revealing to me the name of him who threatens to dagger me," said Pym as he proceeded to open it.

He had scarcely read a few lines when he sank into a chair. His hands fell by his side, a deadly paleness overspread his countenance and he trembled so in every limb that the chair into which he had fallen, fairly shook with his convulsions.

Julian was alarmed and about to rush to the door to summon the servants, but Pym motioned to him to remain where he was. In a few seconds the colour returned to his face, the fit of trembling ceased, and Pym told Julian to leave him for the present and see that he was not interrupted until he should summon him again to the library.

Julian took his station in the ante-room and it was nearly half an hour before Pym opened the door of the library and beckoned him to come in.

CHAPTER II.

BE seated, Julian Bachell," said Pym. "I have news to communicate to you of a painful nature."

"Does the letter which you hold in your hand contain matters of public or of private import?" enquired Julian as he threw himself into a chair, while Pym leaned against the wall near to the window, as if for the purpose of letting the light fall upon the paper and so enabling him to see the better; but in reality with the wish of hiding from his young friend the emotions displayed by his looks and features.

"The contents are of a mixed nature: of public matters we will speak hereafter. Nerve yourself to hear and bear calmly, and as a christian should do, the sad tidings that I have to disclose to you. Your father, Julian, is—"

"So angry, doubtless, at my having listened to the arguments of Master Pym and confessed my attachment to his daughter, that he has renounced me as a son, and, as far as in his power lies, disinherited me. Speak on, sir, I can bear your news, seeing they are not entirely unexpected," said Julian, showing an angry spot on his brow.

"Would that your guess at the contents of this letter were true!" said Pym sadly, "but you must prepare for sadder tidings; and I would that it fell to another's lot to make them known."

"Speak on, sir, I can bear ill news better than I can bear suspense."

"Julian Bachell—you are fatherless.—Master Bachell is numbered with the dead."

"My father dead! it is impossible,—but yesterday I received a letter from him in which he made no allusion to bodily ailment of any kind. Does the plague rage among the king's friends, or has a battle been fought and my father slain fighting on the side of his sovereign?"

"Master Bachell has been slain in private combat—in the *duello*, as it is termed. A dispute, it seems, arose between the avowed papists and

those who still call themselves protestants, about the impropriety of Charles Stuart's allowing his queen Henrietta, or Marie, as the French love to call the daughter of Henri Quatre, to retain about her person so numerous a train of French ecclesiastics, many of whom are known to be Jesuits: your father, Julian, spoke warmly on the subject for he was truly a protestant gentleman, though misled by his zeal for what he deemed loyalty. He was insulted by one Hurstmonçeau, once a retainer of the Duke of Buckingham but now a captain in some regiment. Before the matter had been laid before Charles Stuart and his intervention been procured, they met, and your father fell, killed by a thrust of his opponent's rapier."

"I will avenge him, ere I die!" said Julian, as he flung himself from his chair and walked rapidly up and down the library.

"Vengeance belongeth to another, Julian; be composed," said Pym "and hear the rest of my news."

"When fell my father—my good, indulgent parent?" asked Julian, as the tears trickled from his eyes. "Would that I had never left him!—nor should

I have done so had not my jealousy of Hugh de Mohun, whom I hate and detest, driven me to schemes that threw me into your power, Master Pym. And what have you made of me? the murderer of my only parent, for my mother I knew not, and the deserter of my king and country;—would that I were dead!"

Julian flung himself into the chair from which he had risen a few moments before, and, throwing his head upon the library table burst out into another flood of tears, sobbing as though his heart would break.

Pym stood silently watching him and his eyes were moistened as he did so. He allowed his grief to have free vent, and when he saw that the paroxysm was over, he approached him and laid his hand gently on his shoulder.

Julian shrank from his touch, and begged him to leave him to himself until he should have recovered from the shock which the sudden tidings of his father's death had caused him.

Pym obeyed and left the library. Julian then threw himself on the ground, and, after a hearty

burst of tears, knelt down and prayed that Heaven might give him an opportunity to repay to Hugh de Mohun and Hurstmonçeau the misery he was then suffering.

“ Rise, sir, and insult not the Almighty by uttering a prayer from a heart that contains the most unchristian feelings of hatred and revenge!”

Julian looked up and saw Agatha Pym standing before him. He fixed his eyes upon her usually meek countenance, and, in the pride of man, expected her to quail under his gaze. He was mistaken; she regarded him with a calm severity of which he deemed her incapable. Her figure appeared to be dilated beyond its usual dimensions, and, as she lifted her hand upwards as a signal for him to rise from his knees, he obeyed it as if he had not the power to resist.

“ I came here, at my father’s express wish, for he deemed it not unmaidenly in one to whom you had plighted your troth, to console you under your sad bereavement. Instead of suffering from grief for the sudden loss of a kind father, how do I find you ? profaning your lips by prayers for vengeance on an

innocent young man—one who was your friend and never injured you willingly, and, instead of submitting to the chastisement which—”

“Agatha, Agatha, if you love me, as I believe you do, do not argue with me now. I am, as I believe, not in the enjoyment of my full senses; leave me—let me commune with my own heart, and be still. I never until this moment felt the full force of those fearful words—a horrible dread overwhelmed me—a dread of something undefined and therefore the more fearful—leave me Agatha,” said Julian.

“I will leave you, Julian Bachell,” said Agatha, laying her hand upon his arm “but it shall be upon one condition.”

“Name it, dearest, name it, and if human nature can comply with it, it shall be performed.”

“It is that you pray—but not for vengeance: pray that the evil spirit may be driven out of you. When your prayer shall have been heard, which, rest assured, it will be if you do but pray in all sincerity—then you shall find in me, in my mother—in all of us—friends to sympathize with you in your sorrows—Pray, Julian—pray earnestly.”

Julian gazed on the ground to which Agatha pointed, as if to bid him kneel there, and when she had left him fell upon his knees and tried to pray as she had bidden him; the attempt, however, was vain. His evil passions got the mastery of his better feelings, and his prayer for mercy, for comfort in his bereavement, was exchanged for vows of revenge. He rose from his knees, as if ashamed of so humiliating a posture, wiped the tears, tears shed in passion rather than sorrow, from his eyes; and when Pym returned to the room he met him with a proud and almost fierce manner.

"I begged to be left alone, sir, but it seems that I am to be treated as if still a prisoner on my parole."

"Julian," said Pym "I can forgive you—for I can understand your feelings. I would not have intruded, had I not something further to make known to you. Be seated and listen to me. You asked me but now where your father was slain. He fell near to the town of Shrewsbury from which, it appears, Charles Stuart is marching into Warwickshire with a large force, augmented by the troops brought to him by his nephews, the

Princes Rupert and Maurice, to meet the Parliamentarians under Lord Essex. A battle is shortly expected to be fought, and may God aid the right and so close these civil dissensions!"

"Tell me," said Julian "from whom you have this information, and whether it be from a person on whose truth you may rely."

"If you wish me to name to you the writer of this letter, containing the account of your father's death and other matters concerning myself, I cannot do so," said Pym.

"The contents may be false, then, and my father still living," said Julian eagerly.

"I grieve to say that the report has been confirmed, and by those of whose truth we cannot doubt. Messengers have arrived from Lord Essex who alludes to the dissensions in Charles Stuart's army, and mentions the name of Master Bachell as of one who has fallen a victim to them."

"May I read that letter, sir, which you seem to be so careful to hide from my sight?" asked Julian.

"I would rather you should not, Julian—for it is worded most offensively. It charges upon me

the death of your father, your apostacy, as the writer terms your conviction of and conversion to the truth, and that too by means that, as a father, I blush to name. Moreover, it taxes me with being the principal, if not the sole, cause of the rebellion against Charles Stuart, and ends with a threat, at which, if I were inclined to believe the utterer of it a prophet, I should shudder."

"Let me hear it, I intreat of you," said Julian. "If I know the nature of the danger that threatens the father of Agatha, and, I will add, my kind friend, I may be able to ward it off."

"Not if it be of the nature predicted by the writer of this," said Pym, as he drew the packet from his vest—"but you shall hear it and judge for yourself. After accusing me, as I have made known to you, of causing much private and public mischief, the writer thus concludes:—'Look you, John Pym,—of that civil strife of which you have been the beginning you will not see the end: you will perish and that shortly—not like an honourable gentleman in the battle-field, not by the dagger of the assassin—but by so loathsome a disease as shall cause your nearest and dearest to avoid you

in disgust, and mark the vengeance of the Almighty upon him who has dared to rouse a nation against its anointed king."

"Horrible!—most horrible!" said Julian. "Bears the document any signature?"

"None," said Pym "save the words 'One to whom it has been revealed.'"

"Have you no suspicion of its author?"

"Not the slightest," said Pym "yet cannot I but believe that it is the work of some enemy to the State, who would, by thus exciting my private fears, render me unfit to carry out the great work which I have undertaken to perform."

"I wish that I had had presence of mind sufficient to have enabled me to secure the messenger of such evil tidings," said Julian "but, I must confess that I was thinking more of myself and the cruel accusations brought against me than of the packet that was entrusted to me for safe delivery into your hands. It was like a child to act as I did, and I am vexed at my want of forethought and consideration."

"Fret not yourself about it, Julian ; I will think no more about this paper although I will not de-

stroy it: by preserving it I may one day or other discover its writer. In the mean while I will lock it up securely, lest it should fall into the hands of any member of my family and so cause them unnecessary alarm."

When Pym had thus spoken, he placed the papers in a drawer of the library table, and, having locked them in securely, put the key into his pocket.

"Now, that being secured, we will join my family within," said Pym.

"Not so," said Julian "I am not in a fit state of mind to join your family circle as has been my wont. It is not grief alone for my father's loss, though I deeply grieve that he should have died and in displeasure with me, that renders me unwilling to resume that social intercourse which hath proved so delightful to me of late. I have a wish near to my heart which I would disclose to the father of her whom I love most dearly."

"Speak it then," said Pym, affectionately laying his hand on Julian's shoulder.

"You know, my kind friend, that, in despite of your powerful arguments, I have hitherto declined to declare myself convinced that your views of the

state of the nation and the best remedy for the ills that surround it were correct: the prejudices of birth and education are difficult to be surmounted. Now that my father, the only tie that bound me to the party which he espoused, is taken from me, I unhesitatingly declare myself to be a friend to the Parliament, who oppose tyranny on behalf of the people, and will join their party at once."

"Be not so hasty, Julian," said Pym; "I fear me that your motives for joining the Earl of Essex and fighting by his side are not so pure as you yourself may imagine—revenge, I doubt not, is the principle by which you are mainly actuated."

"It is not, sir: of that I can assure you."

"You may fancy that it is not; but, could you calmly analyse your feelings, you would find that the hope of meeting this Hurstmonceaux, who slew your father, in the ranks of the enemy, and avenging his death upon him, is the ruling wish of your mind. Let a few days pass over, and if your wishes be unchanged, rely upon me not to thwart them."

"I would go—and go at once, sir," said Julian.

"Not without taking a farewell leave of Mistress Pym and her daughter?"

"Yes, sir, without exchanging a look—for it would unnerve me and make of me a mere woman," said Julian.

"I cannot consent to it," said Pym, "remain here quietly for some days, and if, as I said before, your wishes remain unchanged, I will not thwart them. I will not ask you to join our family circle to-night, although your absence will be regretted. Your servant shall attend you here and in your own apartments; though it be but early, I will say good night, and may Heaven bless you, and make the chastisement it has inflicted on you profitable to you!"

Pym looked kindly on him as he spoke these words, pressed his hand warmly, and left the room.

Julian remained for some minutes motionless as a statue. He then rose and paced the room for some half hour, as if debating with himself a matter of some deep import. He suddenly left the library, and by means of a back staircase gained his own room. He summoned his servant and

bade him seek Roger Priver and say that he wished to speak with him.

In a few seconds the wool-comber of Dunster made his appearance, somewhat excited by a long argument into which he had been led by Master Browne, and by the strong ale which Derby House held within its cellars.

"How now, sir?" said Julian, "art in thy cups?"

"I have but quaffed one flagon in wishing success to the good cause which is likely to be put to the test of arms shortly, and I am accused of having exceeded in my potations," said Roger Priver looking indignantly. "But, as I have told Master Robert Browne, who groweth tedious in his harangues—he is become a mere twaddler sir, of late—as I told him, I will away to the wars and not spend my life in tramping daily to Westminster, amidst the shouts of the Malignants who do but jeer at me, and in listening to his discourses, which, like pickled pork eaten at every meal, pall upon the appetite."

"Listen to me, Priver," said Julian, "my father hath been slain—"

"So I heard, and by one of his own malignant friends—there is discord among them," said Priver.

"My father has been slain and I wish to avenge his death."

"And but right too—it is due to your filial feelings," said Priver.

"In order to effect my purpose, I must quit this mansion secretly and join the army."

"I will go with you, and I doubt not but under my instructions you will, in time, make an useful soldier," said Priver.

"Be secret then, sir, and see everything ready for our departure so soon as it shall be dark," said Julian.

Roger Priver, who was tired of a life of inactivity, and wearied of the preacher's rule, which he exercised somewhat severely, took such measures to secure horses and pack up what he deemed necessary for the campaign, that, ere the morning's sun rose upon the city of London, he and Julian Bachell, with a couple of well mounted followers, were past Hounslow Heath on their way to Warwickshire.

CHAPTER III.

It was in the evening of the 23rd. of October, 1642 when Hugh de Mohun, having attended the afternoon service in St. John's Chapel, attached to Merton College, summoned young Anthony Wood from his rooms—for he was then a resident member—to accompany him in a stroll without the walls.

The sun was setting gloriously in the west, and the trees in Merton Grove, then exchanging the dark green of summer for the varied tints of autumn, caught its departing rays in their luxuriant branches, and presented to the eye such a picture as an artist loves to paint.

"Come Master Anthony," said Hugh, "lay aside your violin, of which your neighbours will

soon be weary, unless you practise with greased strings and bow—for you never suffer them to be at peace, and come with me for a walk into the fresh air.”

“I will but finish this anthem in which I wish to perfect myself that I may take a part therein in the choir of the cathedral on Sunday next. I will then go with you gladly,” said Wood as he applied some resin to his bow.

“No, no, Anthony, come away at once; if you begin playing and singing again, there will be no stopping you, as I know by experience; so let down the strings, put your child to bed—for you are as careful of your fiddle as a mother of her infant, and don your cap and gown. It is unseemly as you know, for a student to appear abroad without his full dress on a Sunday lest he should be mistaken for a holiday-making townsman.”

Wood reluctantly obeyed, but when they were without the college-gates strode away at his usual rapid pace.

“Whither so fast, man?” said Hugh, “Folks will say that you are walking for a wager, or flying from the proctors.”

"We have but a short hour or so before us," said the boy, "besides, I hate to crawl and creep along like an old woman suffering from a rheum, let us hasten our pace, at any rate until we get without the walls into the fresh air, when I promise you that I will walk as slowly as you please."

"Well, then, let us go straight for the north-gate and then we can stroll slowly towards the church of St. Giles. It is a favorite walk with the towns-folks and we shall have a chance of seeing their fair wives and daughters," said Hugh.

"It may be gratifying to you, De Mohun, to stare modest women out of countenance and to gain a tender look from a pair of bright eyes, but for myself I confess I would rather gaze upon an old Roman porch or a Gothic window than upon the fairest she in Oxford," said Wood.

"Speak not your treason against the fair sex so loudly or you will be annihilated by angry frowns," said Hugh.

"And what care I for that? but rest assured I shall pass scathless, for your handsome face, Hugh, will occupy all their attention: you ought to thank me for making my ungainly form a foil to yours."

"Enough, Master Wood, do not flatter me ; for I have ever noted that when you are lavish of your adulations, you have some secret object in view and thus hope to weaken my opposition to it, come, confess—you wish to lead me somewhere or other," said Hugh.

"I would merely beg of you to hurry through this crowd of idle citizens and gaping students, and come with me beyond St. Giles' church a little way along the road that leads to Banbury," said Wood coaxingly.

"And with what intent?" said Hugh mending his pace to keep up with the boy.

"They have been busy excavating there of late and I have heard that many bones of strange animals have been discovered. I would merely see if I cannot pick up a something which may have escaped their notice, or been deemed unworthy to be carried away through their ignorance of its value."

"Well, well I will gratify you in so laudable a wish," said Hugh, "if it be not to go to such a distance as shall prevent us reaching the gates again before they are closed."

"The spot is within a mile of us, Hugh, near to

the little farm known by the name of the Diamond house, though whence it has obtained the name I have not been able to discover."

"Come on then, boy," said Hugh, as with rapid strides he led the way to the spot thus indicated to him. They had nearly reached the farm when a horseman was seen in the distance pressing on as fast as his beast, which was evidently distressed, could carry him.

"Who cometh here? I wonder," said Wood, "he is a soldier as you may see by his steel breast-plate and leggings; and in haste too, for observe how continually he applies the spurs to his horse's flanks."

"And what does it concern you, Anthony, to know who or what he is? do you dive into your trench and search for bones or whatever you may expect to find," said Hugh.

"I will wait to see yon gallant trooper pass, for, trust me, he is no common soldier, and may be the bearer of important tidings from the King to the Governor of Oxford Castle."

"Which, of course, he will pull up to disclose to Master Wood, student of Merton," said Hugh.

"I should like to get speech of him," said Anthony "for I know, by the way in which he urges his flagging steed, that he has news to communicate worth hearing. I have a great mind to hail him."

"And get your back well beaten for your impudence as you would richly deserve," said Hugh.

The horseman drew near and it was evident that he had ridden many miles at full speed, for his horse, as could now plainly be seen, was covered with dust and foam. Just as he came to the spot where the two youths were standing, the soldier raised his hat from his head and shouted "Victory, the king has—" but before he could conclude his sentence the wearied beast stumbled and fell, throwing his rider heavily to the ground, and would have rolled over him had not Hugh de Mohun sprung into the road, and quicker than could have been deemed possible, withdrawn the soldier from the threatened danger.

"He is dead," said Wood "and we shall get no news from him."

"Do you, instead of standing there and looking like a bewildered fool as you are, run to the farm

yonder for some water, and bring some one to assist me in removing this gentleman thither for he is sorely hurt, but I trust not mortally."

Anthony ran off, and Hugh, exerting his strength, drew the soldier from the road to the bank at its side, against which he placed him in a sitting posture. He then removed his hat and undid the thongs that fastened his armour about him, and examined his limbs to see if any were broken. In undoing the sash which was wound around his body, a packet fell out of its folds. It was tied with thread and sealed with the royal arms, and it bore on its front the name of Colonel Legge, Governor of Oxford Castle. The bearer was ordered to use all convenient speed to deliver it into his hands.

Just as Hugh had read the superscription, Anthony Wood returned with a small beaker of water in his hands which he resigned to Hugh, and seizing the letter seemed much inclined to break the seal and read its contents. Hugh bade him put it down, which the curious boy did, but with evident reluctance.

"Hold the sufferer's head while I pour some of this water into his lips," said Hugh.

Wood sat himself down and took the soldier's head in his lap, while Hugh sprinkled his face copiously with the cool liquid and endeavoured to make him swallow some of it. The attempt was vain, however, as the teeth were firmly closed.

"He is dead, Master Hugh, and we may as well open yonder packet, to see who he is that we may acquaint his friends of the sad mischief that has befallen him," said Wood.

"He is not dead ; for he breathes heavily and his heart beats powerfully. Why did you not bring help from the farm as I bade you."

"Because I found no one there but an old crone who had scarce strength enough to draw me a little water from the well : but look, the soldier is opening his eyes."

As Wood said, the trooper opened his eyes, and, gazing wildly about him, tried to raise himself but fell back again heavily on the boy's thighs.

"Drink, sir, drink freely, the water will revive you," said Hugh, as he applied the beaker to his lips.

After a few ineffectual attempts the soldier

contrived to drink, and after shuddering convulsively again opened his eyes, sat upright and gazed first at the two young men and then at his charger which lay sadly bruised and unable to rise in the middle of the road.

"You feel better now, I trust," said Hugh; "and as I know by examination that your limbs are unbroken, I hope you will be well enough to proceed to Oxford to deliver your dispatches, though your journey must be done on foot, seeing that your horse is incapable of moving further—come, sir, drink again—it will do you good."

"I thank your Grace but I was ever an enemy to the pure element," replied the gentleman staring bewilderedly in Hugh's face.

"Bestow not so grand a title on me, I am but a poor student as you may see by my dress."

"I crave your pardon, but your voice reminded me of other times and personages, and even now, as I look upon your features I cannot help thinking that I have seen them before," said the soldier, "but where am I, and how came I here?"

"You are within a mile of Oxford and came hither on yonder animal that seems as if he had

been ridden somewhat over far and fast and you spoke something of the king and a victory, and have a packet here which doubtless contains news for Colonel Legge," said Wood.

The soldier without regarding the boy continued to gaze at Hugh de Mohun and after muttering half aloud "those features are familiar to me, but where I have seen them I cannot tell." He rose from the ground, shook himself to ascertain that he was uninjured in limb, and walked up to the spot where his horse was lying sadly wounded about the knees and head.

"Poor fellow! said he "you have borne me nobly this day and to think that you should fail me at the last—rise, Warrener, rise and let me see how and where you are hurt."

The horse tried to obey but failed in the attempt.

"My noble Warrener!—it will be a mercy to put an end to your sufferings at once, for you will never more be fit for service."

"His knees are cut to the bone," said Hugh.

"They are, your Grace, and I will, in mercy pistol him."

"Here is your packet, sir," said Anthony, holding out the letter.

"D—n the packet, sir, stand aside," said the stranger as he drew a large and heavy pistol from his holsters and placing the muzzle of it within an inch of the horse's scull pulled the trigger. The animal gave a convulsive shudder and then stretched out his limbs and lay dead.

"Now, boy, give me the packet," said the soldier, "or rather as you seem to have length of foot and no weight to carry, do you, yourself, convey it speedily to Oxford Castle and tell Colonel Legge the accident that has befallen Captain Hurstmonçeau and bid him send a trooper for me with a spare horse for I am something too weary and too much shaken by my fall to walk even so short a distance."

"Do tell me, before I do your errand, what tidings you bring," said Anthony.

"What with my fall and the loss of poor Warrener I had well-nigh forgotten them. But tell every one whom you meet that a battle hath been fought at Edge-hill and that the king is victorious over his enemies. We have drubbed the round-

headed curs soundly—now away, boy, as fast as your long limbs will carry you.”

Anthony did not wait for further orders, but throwing the skirts of his gown over his arm that it might not impede him, started off like a greyhound from the slips.”

“And now, young sir, as you have slackened my harness with the purpose of giving me breathing room, I must further impose upon your kindness to make all these buckles fast again.”

Hugh readily did as he was requested.

“While you are engaged in performing the office of a valet or an esquire to my person, you will glad me by telling me to whom I am indebted for these kindnesses,” said the soldier.

“My name is Hugh de Mohun and I am at present a student in Merton College, but most anxious to exchange my gown and cap for the helmet and cloak of a soldier.”

“De Mohun? it is a name not unknown to fame in days gone by: they had large estates in Somersetshire or I am mistaken. Are you a scion of that family?” asked the soldier somewhat earnestly.

"There you puzzle me," said Hugh, and he blushed as he replied, "I am an orphan, left to the care of a churchman who died of the plague in Bristol, and left me ignorant of my family and even of my parents. Having been thus communicative to a stranger may I beg of him to tell me who he is?"

"You have a right to ask it of me in return for the services you have so kindly rendered me; but had I not been beholden to you, there is a something both in your voice and features which seems to remind me of bygone times and of friends long since dead. Before I proceed with the brief introduction of myself will you give me the name of the ecclesiastic to whom your friends intrusted you?"

"Willingly," said Hugh; "it was to a most worthy man, Robert Snelling, of late Parson of Dunster in Somerset."

"Snelling?—the name is strange to me; but as to myself, I bear my family name of Hurstmonçeau and am as you may suppose of foreign extraction; my name and my complexion tell the tale. Brought up as a page in the household of

his Grace of Buckingham, I was with him when he fell by the hands of Felton, and helped to seize the assassin. My zeal for my master was rewarded by the king, and I was placed in the army in which I now serve as a captain. I am not given to boasting, but I flatter myself that the fact of my having been selected by my sovereign as the messenger to tell Colonel Legge of his success in his first great battle, and of his intention of making Oxford his head quarters is no slight proof of the estimation in which I am held by him.

"Comes the king to Oxford, then, in person?" asked Hugh.

"Assuredly and will there summon a parliament more loyally disposed, it is to be hoped, than the one that now sits in Westminster."

"As you are so recently from the king's army you may be able to inform me of the well-being of a gentleman in whom I am greatly interested, for he showed me, ever, much kindness, although his son, who was once my friend, has of late been estranged from me," said Hugh.

"Name him and I have no doubt but that I can give you all the information you require, for

there are none of note in the king's forces with whom I am not acquainted," said the captain.

"I would ask after one Master Bachell of Ashley-combe, in Somerset."

The captain turned deadly pale and hid his eyes with his hands, but after a while he recovered himself, and taking Hugh's hand said slowly and solemnly, "I would that you had named any other man than Master Bachell. I grieve to say—and yet why should I grieve, his chance might have been mine—I grieve to say that he fell by my hand, young man."

"Is Master Bachell dead then?"

"He is dead—we quarrelled and fought in single combat: he fell pierced by my rapier."

"Are there dissensions then, in the royal army?"

"We fell out on a religious matter. I am a Roman Catholic as my fathers were before me: Master Bachell was a protestant, and as such took upon himself to make some observations on the Queen and her household which I did not choose to submit to with patience. We met and the result was what I have told you. I would that it had not been such—but it is past—Master Ba-

chell was a worthy man, and the king could have spared a better officer."

"Know you if his son was reconciled to his father before his death?" enquired Hugh.

"His son, Julian Bachell, is not named without execration by a loyal man: he is a renegade, an apostate to his faith and principles, and all for the love of king Pym's puritanical daughter; but see, here come some half score troopers, dispatched, I doubt not, by Colonel Legge to attend on my unworthy self."

The soldiers galloping at full speed soon reached the spot where Hugh and his new friend were standing. They halted their horses and touching their steel-caps dismounted at his order.

"Drag me yon horse into this pit and cover his remains carefully, having first removed his accoutrements. Poor Warrener! I cannot stay to see you buried—farewell my good steed—you have perished in a good cause. Come on Master Hugh de Mohun and do you my men, as soon as you have buried my charger, follow me and have horses ready for my friend here and myself."

Captain Hurstmonçeau walked slowly away but stopped ere he had gone many yards. When Warrcner could no more be seen he wiped the tears from his eyes, and sat down by the road side until the troopers come up to await his further orders and to assure him that his horse was carefully buried. He then mounted a trooper's horse and bidding Hugh mount another, they rode into Oxford amidst the cheers of the populace and the ringing of the bells from every steeple in the city.

CHAPTER IV.

WHEN they arrived at the outer gate of the castle, Hugh de Mohun dismounted and was about to resume his cap and gown, which he had doffed and carried on his saddle before him, lest the unwonted sight of a student, in his academical dress, galloping on a fully accoutred troop horse, should give cause of offence to the proctors and of ridicule to other spectators.

“What ho! young sir, you quit me not yet,” said Captain Hurstmonceau, “you must with me to Colonel Legge and receive his thanks for having rendered me such valuable services. You will thus have an opportunity moreover, of hearing the contents of the king’s packet which your long-legged ungainly friend was not long of delivering.

Come, sir, in with me. Room there for the student."

"We have positive orders, sir, to admit no one but—" said the officer on guard.

"D—n your orders, sir, admit this young man, who has rendered me valuable services, on my responsibility," said the captain.

The officer obeyed; the gates were thrown open, and amidst the shouts of a vast concourse of people, gownsmen as well as townsmen, Hugh de Mohun walking by the side of Captain Hurstmonceaux was ushered into the presence of the Governor.

"Before we converse on matters of public interest permit me to present to Colonel Legge, Master Hugh de Mohun, a student in Merton College, who deserves his thanks for services performed to a King's messenger," said the Captain.

"Neither the person nor the name of this young man are unknown to me; his zeal in the royal cause, his proficiency in warlike exercises, and if it will not make him vain to say it—his personal graces, have drawn my attention upon him already;

I now however, offer him my hand and thanks, in the king's name, for the help he has afforded to Captain Hurstmonceau," said Legge.

"Carry your kindness a little further and bid him sup with us," said the Captain, "if he had ridden as far and as fast as I have done without tasting food—and truth to say, we have been but badly victualled for some days past—he would feel somewhat ravenous—at any rate he will be glad to hear the news I have to communicate."

"I thank you," said Hugh, "but I must get me within the College walls or I shall incur the displeasure of Dr. Brent, who treats me with marked severity."

"I bid you to supper with us, Mohun; and moreover undertake to give you such a message to your warden as shall fully explain the cause of your absence from college," said Legge.

"Include me in the invitation and the excuse," said Anthony Wood, coming forward from a recess in the room.

"As I live, it is my long-legged friend to whom I entrusted the king's packet; the inside of which

he seemed itching to learn. He fled like a lap-wing with it, and has earned a supper by his speed," said the Captain.

"Master Wood's modesty will never interfere with his preferment," said the colonel smiling on the boy whom he knew well, "his wishes shall be gratified."

"And that as speedily as he ran I trust," said the captain, "for I am fairly exhausted from toil and hunger."

"As soon as Captain Hurstmonceau shall have removed the dust with which both his person and dress are soiled, the refreshments shall be ready," said the Colonel.

A servant was sent with him to show him the apartment which was to serve as his sleeping-room, and to supply him with such garments, from his master's wardrobe, as he might stand in need of.

In the meanwhile orders were given for the supper to be in readiness; and when the captain reappeared, freed from his armour and soiled apparel, and dressed in a loose gown which he had selected more for comfort than for the elegance of its appearance, the Colonel took him by the arm and

led him into the hall, a low apartment, and gloomy-looking, in spite of a number of lamps that were arranged along its walls and placed upon the long supper table.

A solid meal appeared upon the board, and after a short grace had been said by the chaplain of the Castle, the captain seized upon a venison pasty that stood before him, and fell foul of its contents in a manner which showed that he had not vainly boasted of his appetite.

The colonel exchanged glances and smiles with Hugh de Mohun, as he watched the breach in the pasty grow wider and wider and its walls disappear down the cavalier's throat, but when, laying down his knife and fork, he seized a huge flagon of Bordeaux wine and quitted it not until it was fairly emptied, he could not refrain from laughing openly and saying, "well done, sir Captain; if the king's friends fought at Edgehill with half the zeal that one of them has displayed in eating and drinking, his enemies must have been entirely devoured."

"You may laugh, Colonel Legge, at my hunger and thirst, but had you tasted nothing for some

few days past but coarse bread, and but little of that too, washed down with the purest water you could obtain from a muddy ditch or a stagnant pool, and ridden some thirty miles at full speed, you would understand my case the better; as it is I will but request that this jug of Claret may be replenished, and will, as I sip its contents, answer such questions as you may wish solved for your own satisfaction and the gratification of your guests; among whom my long-legged friend, who seems to be possessed of the appetite as well as the speed of a gazehound, is most entitled to hear the news contained in the packet which he so readily placed in your hands. ”

The servants cleared the table of the supper, and having furnished it with wines of all sorts and spices, left the company free to hear the news.

“Will it please you sir to read the king’s letter,” asked the officer next in command to Legge.

“I will tell you its contents in a few words. He bids me give notice to the vice-chancellor and the mayor of the city that he shall arrive here as speedily as may be, and make this place his winter quarters, holding his court here and a par-

liament also should occasion require it. The princes will accompany him and the Queen will meet him here so soon as she shall have made the necessary arrangements," said Colonel Legge.

"But the fight sir, what says the king of that?" said the same officer who had spoken before.

"Only that he has been so successful in its commencement that he entertains no doubt of a decisive victory. He refers me for further particulars to our guest, here, Captain Hurstmonçeau."

"And I will willingly supply them, though, in truth I can only tell you that the royal guards, who claimed to be placed in the foremost ranks and the cavalry under the princes Maurice and Rupert, made such short work of their part of the affair, that the enemy, although they greatly exceeded them in numbers and were well-provendered fled before them like a herd of deer from before the hungry hounds whom our poor fellows closely resembled, seeing, as I have already hinted, that we were all of us nearly half-starved. My own regiment having but little or nought to do, his majesty was pleased to select me to bear these tidings hither, and I doubt not but that other

messengers will speedily arrive, who will be able to furnish you with all the particulars of what I cannot doubt will prove a decisive victory."

Several questions were put to him by the officers assembled; but, more than that he himself had seen the enemy flying and being pursued on one of the wings, by prince Rupert and the cavalry, he could not say.

"We will drink, gentlemen, to the health of our king, and confusion to his enemies," said Legge as he raised a goblet to his lips.

"Every man seized his cup, drank deeply of its contents, and the solid masonry of the old hall shook with the joyous shouts that followed.

Many other healths were drunk—for it was not charged against the cavaliers that they shunned the wine-cup, and many an eye was getting dim or glassy under the effects of the frequent draughts. Captain Hurstmonceaux was getting talkative and even quarrelsome over the feast, which had been prolonged to nearly midnight, in hopes that further tidings might reach them from the king: Colonel Legge, therefore thought it best to dismiss his friends, and, taking leave of the two students, sent

an officer with them to see them safely within the gates of their college, and tell the Porter to acquaint Dr. Brent that they had been detained until that late hour, for reasons which he would explain to him.

"We part not so, my young friend," said the jovial captain as he rose, and under the influence of the quantity of wine he had druek, staggered up to Hugh. "We part not so—we will crush another cup to our better acquaintance. I like you, young man—you remind me of faces and times long since vanished—we will but drink one cup to our better acquaintance, and another to the memory of poor Warrener—who should have died in a battle-field, and not on a high road, like a common post-horse—and then we will to bed."

"I will drink no more to-night—I have already indulged too freely, and have to take care of Master Anthony, here—"

"What, young long-legs? truly he stretches out his shanks like a pair of compasses and can scarcely maintain his equilibrium—but you are as sober as a bishop ought to be, and shall do me justice in one cup at least," said the captain.

"I must refuse, even at the risk of giving offence and losing the chance of securing your friendship," said Hugh firmly "but if you will honour my breakfast in Merton with your presence, I will gladly join you in drinking over our college ale and a little spiced wine to our better knowledge of each other."

"And I will join you," said Wood, speaking rather thickly, "and will point out to the noble captain many things worthy of being seen."

"Well, agreed then," said the captain "and, remember, young man, that sobriety in every condition of life is a virtue—I look upon it as an inestimable virtue—especially in a soldier, who—" but, before he could complete his opinions upon the peculiar virtue to which he was not addicted, Colonel Legge took him by the arm, and, bowing to the party, led him with some difficulty from the room.

Hugh de Mohun had also some difficulty in getting Master Anthony Wood to the college gates, for the boy, who was generally abstemious, had taken more than his brains could well bear—but all through his zeal for the king and his joy at

his victory over the puritans, whom he detested with all the rancour of one brought up to think that kings reigned *divino jure*, and that all who were not within the pale of the Church stood but a poor chance of escaping condemnation. Hugh, however, with the assistance of the officer whom Legge had so kindly sent with them, got him safely into college and into bed, in spite of his powerful efforts to resist them.

When he had fastened Wood's rooms securely and taken leave of the officer, Hugh went to the apartments of Gilbert Dynes, not doubting to find him, as usual, consuming the midnight oil over some weighty volume, and wishing to make known to him the king's victory over the parliamentarians and his intended sojourn in Oxford.

He entered the outer room, after having knocked several times without eliciting a reply to his summons. Everything was arranged as it usually had been. A large chair was placed before a cushion, on which rested a huge book, and by its side stood a lighted lamp. As this was always extinguished before Dynes retired for the night, Hugh, concluding that his tutor had left his rooms

for a short time for some purpose or other, sat down with the intention of waiting for his return. He amused himself for a while with reading the book out of which it was clear Dynes had been studying. It was a work containing the life of Ignatius Loyola and an account of the institution of the society of the Jesuits.

At any other time Hugh might have been deeply interested in such a subject; but the events of the day and the possibility of accomplishing the wish nearest his heart of gaining a commission in the army through the influence of the Prince, who would, he doubted not, accompany the King to Oxford, diverted his thoughts from the matter before him.

He closed the book, took up the lamp and entered Dynes' sleeping-room, the door of which was open. It bore its usual appearance and Hugh was about to quit it under an assurance that its occupant would shortly appear, when he saw a small packet lying on the seat beneath the window. He examined it by the light of the lamp, and, to his no slight surprise, saw that it was directed to Perkin

Doyle, with orders to deliver it safely and speedily into the hands of Hugh de Mohun.

To break the seal and undo the string that bound it was the work of a moment. It contained a shirt of coarse horse-hair, a scourge of thongs, a breviary of the church of Rome, and a small but beautifully carved crucifix of ivory.

"What can these mean?" said Hugh, as he surveyed each article: "had I been a Romanist, I could well have understood such a present as a hint to me that, having neglected the cross and the breviary, I was to do penance in the shirt of hair and scourge myself with these thongs—but, as an unworthy member of the reformed church, which regards the chastisement of the spirit rather than the body, I am at a loss to know what Master Dynes may mean by enclosing them to me. I will, however, take them to my rooms, and preserve them carefully, as they may one day or another be required at my hands."

Hugh was again about to leave the room, when he observed that a large leathern bag, such as was used by travellers and carried on pack-horses, and

which usually hung from a peg in one corner near the bed-head, was no longer there. A suspicion came across him that Dynes, for some reason or other, had suddenly quitted Oxford. He made bold to open the chest in which he kept his scanty wardrobe, and found that it was empty.

"It is strange," said Hugh, "that one, who seemed to have an interest in me beyond that usually felt by a tutor towards a pupil, should have left me, especially as I am situated, without one word of explanation. I will, however, carefully preserve what he has intrusted to my care, and wait patiently for some message which may inform me of the purpose for which they have been consigned to me, and of the destination of him who has consigned them to me in so mysterious a manner."

Hugh took the packet to his rooms, and, before he deposited it in a place of safe keeping, again examined its contents. On opening the breviary, and turning over its pages, to inspect the curious sketches with which it was fully illuminated, a letter unsealed, and undirected, except that it bore the initials of Hugh's name, fell upon the table. He opened it and read thus:—

"Weighed down by a profound sense of guilt-

ness in having lived, for years, in schism with the only true Church, I am hastening to retrieve my error by leading a life of monastic seclusion and penance in a foreign land. I have been called upon to quit Oxford suddenly and unexpectedly, or I should have explained myself by word of mouth to one whom I regard as a son. I leave to you my books, and trust that an attentive perusal of those volumes which you will find in the secret closet of my bed-chamber, which Perkin Doyle will disclose to you, will convince you of the error of your ways, and teach you the use of the articles herewith enclosed. I can inform you, on undoubted authority, that the Queen will shortly take up her abode in Merton College; cultivate the friendship of those whom she will bring with her, and bid them beware of Dr. Brent, who, as I have reason to know, is disposed to play the traitor, and to promote the interests of the enemies of the king and the Church. You shall hear again ere long from your friend.

G. D."

"This is the result of the sacrilegious attack on the church of St. Cross, and of the mysterious visits of that foreign man, whom I now believe to

be a Jesuit in disguise. I will burn these instruments of a superstitious faith, and with them those books that have wrought upon a mind weakened by illness, and, probably, prepared to receive the doctrines they inculcate by early habits and associations. The lessons of good Master Snelling have taken too deep a root in my mind to be easily eradicated by the special pleadings of Thomas Aquinas and others of his fraternity; but I will destroy their works, lest they fall into other hands and unsettle the faith of those who may peruse them."

Hugh rose as soon as it was light, and, with the help of Perkin Doyle, who was astonished and deeply grieved at the loss of his kind master, conveyed all the books which he found in a secret spot contrived in the floor beneath the bed to his own rooms, where he lighted a fire and burnt them, one by one, and with them the contents of the packet and the letter of Gilbert Dynes. He then had the ashes carefully removed, and prepared to receive Captain Hurstmonceau at his morning's meal.

CHAPTER III.

It was at a late hour, for those times, when Captain Hurstmonceau made his appearance in Hugh's rooms. His excuse for not coming to the breakfast before the hour of eight was grounded on the excessive fatigue which he had undergone on the previous day and the consequent necessity of indulging in an additional doze.

The excuse was readily admitted, although Hugh thought that, if all due sincerity had been used, something might have been attributed to the effects of the wine as well as to the fatigue. He did not say so, however, but sent Perkin Doyle to summon Anthony Wood. He returned to say, that the poor boy was suffering so greatly from his unwonted indulgences over night, as to be unable to rise.

"Send him a little of this spiced canary, and bid him drink it. Trust to one, who hath experience in such matters, that he will find the qualminess of his stomach—that croup-sickness which is wont to visit those who exceed in their potations—speedily relieved," said the captain. "It greatly surprises me that, when folks know the painful consequences, they should yield to the temptations of the wine-cup."

"If it please you, sir," said Perkin Doyle quickly, "I have ever found, that young and unsophisticated stomachs are more speedily relieved and restored by a posset of warm ale and ginger, and have proffered the remede to Master Wood, who would have none of it, but is solacing himself with repeated draughts of spring water."

"Spring water, and undiluted? It is a liquid that should never be resorted to, when any other may be come by."

Perkin Doyle was so pleased with this remark, which coincided so entirely with his own opinion, that he made the Captain a very profound bow, and placed a flagon of good sound ale within his reach.

"I will taste of it, and then, with Master Hugh de Mohun's permission, beg of you to drink to the king's health in what remains," said the captain, as he raised the flagon to his lips, and drank so hearty a draught that but little was left for Perkin Doyle. The captain then attacked the meat and rolls, sausages, ham, and eggs, in so resolute a manner as convinced his entertainer that croup-sickness was not one of the ailments to which his guest was liable. A cup or two of spiced wine closed the captain's meal, and he proposed visiting Wood, and acting as his physician, by admistering the remedy he had before suggested; but as Hugh demurred to it, fearing the dose might throw the patient into a fever, he gave up the plan, and consented to accompany Hugh to the works in Christchurch meadow.

When they had passed through the postern-gate, which led through the grove into what is now called Merton fields; they saw some hundreds of the students and citizens busily employed in throwing out the ground under the direction of Master Rallingson, to whom the work had been entrusted. The captain cast a critical eye first

upon the works themselves, and then upon the director of them, and expressed his admiration that one so young, and who could have had no aid from practice, should have performed his duties so effectually.

Of a sudden, a loud clamour arose, and several persons were seen hastening to a particular spot, where, as it seemed, a battle was going on, for parties were seen struggling with one another.

"What meaneth this?" said Hurstmonçeau, "call you this discipline?"

"Strict discipline as it seems to me," said Hugh, "for they are dragging along a culprit, as well as his struggles will allow them."

"As I live, it is my long-shanked friend, how call you him? who bore my dispatch yestere'en to the governor, and who pleaded illness from excess of wine, to absent himself from the breakfast this morning."

"It is indeed that unlucky boy, Wood; let us hasten to his succour; assuredly he has been at some of his tricks, and has drawn upon him the wrath of the citizens, for I see that he is in the hands of the city serjeant, who hath no lawful

power over him, now that he is a matriculated member of the University."

"To his rescue then!" said the Captain, as he followed to the spot where Anthony was kicking and struggling with his captors most manfully, to the great amusement of the bystanders, who were impartially cheering both parties.

"Stand aside, Master Sergeant," said Hugh, "and release Master Wood: if he has done aught amiss, he is responsible to the authorities of the University, and not to your employers—stand aside, I say, or, I will take him from you by force."

"Release the boy, Sir Citizens' beadle, or whatever you may be, or, my rapier and your bowels shall be better acquainted;" said the Captian, as he drew, and made a pretended pass at the officer, who turned deadly pale, and released his prisoner.

"Shame! shame!" cried the crowd of gownsmen, laughing, "to frighten poor tailor Bounce with cold steel!"

"Shame, indeed," cried a body of stalwart city youths, "to draw upon our officer; we will make a quarrel of it—Town, Town, stand together."

"Gown, Gown," shouted the University youths,

and those who had been working peaceably and zealously together in the trenches suddenly became foes, and flew upon each other, as if they were the bitterest enemies: as no weapons were used, but those which nature had furnished them with, little injury, save ugly blows, was inflicted or sustained. Captain Hurstmonçeau seemed delighted with 'the affair;' he screamed, laughed, and shouted, saying, "Well done, Gown! well fought, worthy Cits! by my faith, de Mohun, you have injured the mastication of yon bulky trader, for his teeth have parted company with his gums."

Just as the fray was at its height, a cry of "The Proctors are coming!" separated the warriors, who fled in various directions and resumed their labours, mixed together promiscuously and as amicably as if they had not been at variance with each other. The city sergeant, however, seeing that the proctors were at hand to aid him, again seized Anthony Wood, and held him tightly, until they came up and demanded of him for what cause he dared to lay hands on a student.

"This, master Proctors," said the official, assuming an air of dignity, "is Master Wood who hath often given offence by his interference with the

workmen; and who, not many days since, stoned our worthy town-clerk, and but now, he was detected in drinking a beaker of wine, which I had provided for my own refreshment."

"What reply have you to make to this charge?" asked one of the proctors.

"It is false—I was but smelling to the contents of his bottle, when he seized upon me, and hurried me away, thinking to bring me up before Mr. Mayor, for committal to the city prison," said Wood.

"A base act, seeing that he interfered with matters that did not concern him," said the captain.

"I know you not, sir, but your view of the matter is a just one," said the proctor. "Mr. Sergeant, release the youth instantly, or you shall suffer for your unwarrantable conduct; I will take him under my authority and punish him, if you can substantiate the charge against him."

The sergeant obeyed amidst the jeers of all around him, and returned completely crest-fallen to resume his work in the trenches; Wood was ordered to fall behind and accompany the proctor to his college.

"Why, how now, Master Anthony?" said Hugh, "I thought you had been ill, and in bed."

"I was too ill to face your breakfast, Hugh, and too ill to lie in bed, so I hastened hither for fresh air; somehow I felt myself rather overcome with thirst, and seeing Mr. Sergeant's bottle, I could not resist tasting its highly flavoured contents; those citizens know how to live."

"And proctors know how to punish, Master Anthony: you will be confined to the walls of Merton, with a heavy task to perform, as sure as—"

"I see Colonel Legge and some score soldiers riding into the meadows by the back gate, waving their hats, and cheering, as though some tidings of good news had arrived;" said Anthony starting off as fast as he could run, in spite of the shouts of the proctor, who called upon him to stand still by the faith he owed to the University.

"Let us on with him, gentlemen; I am the officer who brought the news of the victory at Edge-hill to Oxford last night, and would fain hear the additional tidings that have arrived. I will become bail for Master Wood's submission to your authority; being deeply indebted to him for the assistance he rendered to me yester-even."

Although it was not a moment to stand upon

ceremony, the proctors gravely raised their caps, and the captain replied by a military salute; and then, as though curiosity had beaten etiquette out of the field, they set off at a most undignified pace for the spot where the governor was standing, surrounded by a vast concourse, all of whom were shouting and giving vent to loud hurrahs.

"Here be rare news, Mr. Proctor—pardon me for my seeming disrespect in running away to learn them—Essex and the few of his Roundhead knaves that were not slain are on their way in full retreat to London: the King hath taken the Castle of Banbury, and is now at Woodstock, on his road to Oxford;" said Wood, scarcely able to speak, from joy and from exhaustion.

"By my faith, Master Hugh, but these are joyful tidings; I must to my duties and join the King, but we will meet this evening and do justice to the good cause in a cup of claret," said the Captain, offering Hugh his hand.

"Nay, do me a favour and take me along with you, I would be among the foremost to welcome the King," said Hugh.

"Come on then, and keep close to me, you shall

take the dress and steed of a trooper, whom I will dismount and unclothe for the purpose," said the captain.

"And I will be there before either of you, if my long legs at which you laugh, do not fail me," said Wood, as he again slipped away from the proctors, who were too busily engaged to attend to his movements.

The captain forced his way towards the governor, and quickly provided himself with a horse, and saw Hugh de Mohun equipped and mounted by his side. His offer to lead the party who were to go out to meet the King was readily accepted; and, having selected such men as he deemed proper for the purpose, he rode hastily up St. Aldate's, along the Corn Market, and out of the North Gate, amidst the cheers of the people, who seemed mad with joy.

As soon as they had passed the walls, they set out at a full gallop along the Woodstock road, but Hugh observed that, as they passed the spot where poor Warrener lay buried, which was between the Banbury and Woodstock roads, the captain cast a glance at it, and seemed disposed to call a halt. He pushed

on, however, and a short half-hour brought them to a spot called Begbrook, where they met several of the party who had been sent forward to announce the King's arrival; but who had thought fit to send on a deputation of their fellows, and stay behind themselves for refreshment and rest.

"Though the day be somewhat cold and the air hath a frosty feel with it, the fellows have done wisely," said the captain. "We will halt and hear what news they have to tell, and try the contents of our host's cellar."

Hurstmonçeau was known to be liberal in his views of discipline, yet many of the soldiers, having indulged beyond discretion, slunk away when they saw him halt his troop at the door of the hostelry—others more bold, and feeling that the occasion gave them an excuse for a little extra indulgence, came forth to meet and greet him.

Hugh followed the captain into a small room near the porch of the little inn, and listened to the recital of a serjeant whom Hurstmonçeau had ordered to attend him. Although Hugh was as zealous a loyalist as ever breathed, and, from his youth and inexperience, incapable of judging correctly of such

matters, he could not help feeling that the account of the victory gained over the parliamentarians was greatly exaggerated; for it appeared from the serjeant's prejudiced statement that, although the cavalry, under the Princes, the nephews of the King, and sons of the Queen of Bohemia, had been entirely successful on their side, and routed and pursued the enemy with great slaughter; yet that Lord Essex's reserve had defeated those opposed to them, and indeed had for a long time possession of the field, much to the danger of the king himself and his two sons, who were within a short distance of Sir William Waller, with only about a hundred horse to protect them.

The fact of Sir Faithful Fortescue and his troop going over to the King's side just as the battle commenced, seems to have caused a panic in Lord Essex's army, which greatly exceeded the King's in numbers. The slaughter was nearly equal on both sides; many officers of note fell, and among them the Lord Lindsey and Sir Edmund Verney who carried the king's standard, which fell into the hands of the enemy, but was recovered and carried off safely by an officer

named Smith. The King's party claimed the victory for him, because he had kept the field and secured the spoils, whereas, the Earl of Essex and his troops had removed to Warwick Castle, and thence to Coventry, leaving their carriages, much of their baggage, and all the wounded, in a village near to the field of battle.

"The cowardly knaves have fled then, and we will drink to their further flight," said the captain.

"You must be quick about it, then, sir," said Anthony Wood, scrambling into the room through the soldiers, who vainly tried to stop him, "for a little beyond Campsfield Common, I can perceive a body of men moving this way, and I doubt not that they are the King's body guards in attendance on his sacred Majesty."

"Drink, boy, drink—our host's ale will refresh you after your run," said the captain. But Wood declined, declaring that nothing stronger than water should pass his lips for some days, unless it might be a sip from the citizen's bottle."

"To saddle then, serjeant, and, should I be summoned to the King's side, and be detained by him,

do you take especial care of this young gentleman, Master Hugh de Mohun, and see that he be not treated as a common trooper," said the captain.

"As for me, I can take good care of myself," said Wood "and it shall go hard with me if I do not get somewhere near to his sacred majesty, and perhaps attract his attention."

"Be careful, Master Anthony, that your taste for prying into everything and being over-curious does not procure you a rebuff, if not worse treatment," said Hugh, as he followed Hurstmonceau, and, mounting his horse, took his place by his side.

The troopers were ordered to form themselves in a single line by the road side, so as to allow room for the royal guards to pass them, and then to fall in in the rear. The country-people, and a few Oxonians, whose anxiety to look upon their King, had brought them to the spot, arranged themselves opposite to the soldiers.

They had not stood thus many minutes before the advance of the King's guards came up : this consisted of a fine body of horse, and was commanded by Sir John Biron, or Byron. Soon after they had passed, the King himself appeared, on horse-

back conversing with two men who, as Hugh afterwards discovered, were his nephews.

As he reached the little party that was drawn up to greet him, and who received him with a joyful shout, many of them throwing themselves upon their knees to bid God bless him, he raised his hat and smiled as he bowed to them. Seeing Hurstmonçeau at the head of his troop, he made a slight sign to him to approach him. Anthony Wood thinking this a good opportunity of gratifying his curiosity, slipped under the belly of the horse upon which Hugh was mounted and darted after the captain. He was ordered to stand back, and not choosing to obey, received a smart blow from the butt-end of a pike, which sent him rolling on the ground, amidst the laughter of the soldiers and bystanders.

The King rode on, keeping Hurstmonçeau by his side: the rest of the guards followed in his rear. Then came a carriage, which had belonged to Lord Essex and had been taken at Keynton near to Edge-hill. Within it were seated two boys, in one of whom Hugh recognized his companion from Dunster, Master Langley, the Prince of Wales, and

rightly conjectured that the other was his brother the Duke of York.

Hugh raised his steel cap from his head and bowed to the Prince, who immediately recognized him, and beckoned to him to approach. Hugh brought his horse to the side of the carriage at a bound, and took the hand which the Prince extended to him from the window.

"I am glad to see that Master Hugh de Mohun has laid aside the serge gown for the coat of mail, but how is it that I see him in the ranks as a common soldier?" said the Prince.

Hugh smiled and told him that he had no right to wear the dress in which he appeared, but that he had been allowed to assume it by the kindness of captain Hurstmonçeau, in hopes of seeing his Royal Highness earlier than he could have done had he awaited his arrival in Oxford.

"I trust, however," said the Prince, laughing, "that you have had enough of Latin and Greek and mean to take up arms in the royal cause."

"Such is my most ardent wish, and I meant to petition your Royal Highness to procure me a commission," said Hugh.

"It shall be done and that before the sun sets this night," said the Prince. "Farewell for the present, you are to be found in Merton College, I presume."

Hugh bowed and fell back among the troopers, who joined the regiment that was in attendance on the Princes. Thus they reached Oxford amidst the firing of cannon, the ringing of bells, and the shouts of a joyful people.

CHAPTER IV.

“I REJOICE to see you prepared for the summons you had a right to expect, Mohun. That sable suit becomes you well, though it intimates that you have lost a friend. The King would see you, sir, and that instantly. Put not on your academical dress, but simply your hat and cloak: the presence-chamber is full enough of caps and gowns as it is, for all the churchmen are crowding round the head of the Church as though he had bishoprics to throw away upon them by bushels.”

“And where may this presence-chamber be of which you speak, Captain Hurstmonçeau?” enquired Hugh.

“The Lord Pembroke, the chancellor of the University, hath solicited from the Dean of Christ-

church the use of the Chapter-house for his majesty to hold his levees therein. It is somewhat small for the purpose, but, in times like these, even Kings must submit to be inconvenienced and to have their state curtailed. But come on, Master Hugh, we must not keep his majesty waiting. Many a favour has been lost by unnecessary delay, so we will on," said the captain.

Hugh, who had adjusted his hat and cloak, declared himself ready to obey the King's command, but, as he said so, Perkin Doyle entered the room, bearing a tray, on which, amongst other things for refection, stood a tankard of Merton ale.

"This is most seasonable," said the captain, coolly seating himself at the table. "I have had nought but dusty travelling and dry talk since we quitted Begbrook. We will refresh ourselves now, when the opportunity offers, for who knows when another may present itself."

"But the King waits, sir," said Hugh anxiously.

"His Gracious majesty knows how ill his friends have fared of late, through the mirepresentations of the Roundheads and the churlishness of the coun-

try folks, and will not take offence if one of his valued officers thinks it right to make amends for past abstemiousness. Sit down, Hugh, and lay in a stock of this pasty, though it be made but of veal and ham, instead of the flesh of the deer. Master Doyle, which name I deem most appropriate for a serving-man, believing it to be founded on the word *δουλος* which is the Greek for such a person, —if such a thing as a cask of claret may be found in your buttery, I pray you bring a quart or two of it hither."

Perkin Doyle bowed, and expressed his regret that the college cellars contained nought but ale, and that of but few strikes of malt to the hogshead.

"Then hasten to the nearest vintner's and procure it, and see that Master Vintner draws of his best. Here is wherewith to pay him," said the captain, as he put into Doyle's hand one of the new gold pieces called a *unité*.

"Stop, Perkin," said Hugh, "let us to the King first sir, I entreat of you. We will then return, and I will promise to be your boon companion for the rest of the evening."

"Never omit a present opportunity, Master

Hugh, put that down as a maxim ever to be acted upon in a soldier's life. Allow Master Doyle to execute my commission, and fear not to lose yours by the delay," said the captain, as he commenced an attack on the pasty.

Doyle left the room and Hugh sat down. He tried to follow the example set him by his friend, but his anxiety to appear before the King took away his appetite. Although Hurstmonceaux disposed of plate after plate with astonishing rapidity, Hugh thought that he masticated more leisurely than usual, and when Perkin Doyle returned with some superior claret, procured from the cellars of the Blue Boar, the captain appeared to waste a great deal of time in inhaling the *bouquet* instead of quaffing the liquor.

"Hah, hah! It has the true flavour of the grapes of Medoc: I know it right well, seeing that the Duke, my master, was particular in his wines and would drink none other. I once was dispatched in person to Bordeaux, with a worthy ecclesiastic whose taste was unquestioned, to select a cargo of the best that could be procured wherewith to store the cellars of his grace," said the captain.

"But the King—the King—" said Hugh, impatiently.

"Right, sir, we will say 'The King' if it please you. We will drink the first goblet to his majesty's further success over his enemies. Master Doyle see that our cups be full to the brim: you may pledge us in yon ale-tankard an you will.

Hugh, rightly conjecturing that he should not move the thirsty captain as long as any wine remained to be consumed, not only accepted the full cup that was offered to him, but poured out another for Perkin, declaring that he should not insult the King by drinking to him in common college ale.

The captain declared that he was in the right, and, to prove it, began a long harangue on the manner in which such matters were arranged in countries and courts that he had visited abroad; but which Hugh cut short by proposing that they should drink another full cup to the Prince of Wales and his royal brother.

"We will drink them separately, sir Hugh, it is not fitting that the heir to the throne should not be toasted singly," said the captain.

Hugh readily complied with the suggestion, for he knew that in filling the third round the supply of wine would be exhausted.

"By my faith you must to the vintner's again; either the goblets are over large or his measure is scanty, for there is none left us to drink to the Queen and wish her a safe voyage over the seas," said the captain.

But Perkin Doyle, at a hint given him by his master, had quitted the room, and Hugh protested that he could not recall him, as he had other persons to attend to who required his services.

"We will to the vintner's in person then," said the captain, "for the little I have tasted of his good wine does but make me long for more."

How Hugh would have evaded this suggestion it is impossible to say, for in such matters Hurstmonceau was not easily to be thwarted; but he was saved from the necessity of appealing to him on the score of his impatience to present himself at the court, by Wood, who came in to say that an officer was waiting below to lead him to his majesty.

"And you would fain go with us, my long-legged friend—I see it in your looks. Come on

then, and trust to my influence to procure you admission into the presence," said the captain.

"You have won my heart for ever," said Anthony, "for I have always longed to see the court, and the King on his throne."

"Which in this instance, will probably be nothing but the chair used by the dean as president of his chapter—but let us on, it is most unseemly to allow anything to detain us from the royal presence," said the captain.

A short walk by Corpus Christi College and through a lane which stood where the library and Peckwater quadrangle now stand, brought them to the cathedral, under the cloisters of which is the Chapter-house, a handsome room and convenient enough for its legitimate uses, but certainly too small for the purpose to which it was then put.

Hurstmonçeau, who was known to the guard stationed without the door, easily obtained admittance for the two youths, and, forcing his way through a deputation of the heads of houses, who had come to congratulate the King on his victory and on his safe arrival among them, contrived to place

Hugh in the front of the circle, and bade Anthony Wood remain among the gownsmen and retire when they were dismissed.

The vice-chancellor had just concluded his address as Hugh gained the side of the throne. The King then rose, and in a tone and manner the sincerity of which could not be questioned, thanked the loyal University for the zeal it had always displayed in his behalf, and for the seasonable supplies it had granted when other resources had failed him. He then raised the vice-chancellor from his knee on which he had fallen to salute the king's extended hand, and an officer, preceding the deputation to the door, dismissed them, highly delighted with the graciousness of their reception, and eager to give further proofs of their love to the King by making him additional loans of plate and moneys. Brent, as he passed Hugh, scowled at him and seemed disposed to ask him what business he had there.

Hurstmonceaux stepped forward and bowed, hoping to catch the King's eye and intending to lead Hugh to him; but, before he could succeed, the Prince of Wales, who had been sitting beside his

father, a little behind the chair that did duty as a throne, stood up and whispered a few words in the royal ear. The king smiled and nodded assent, as it seemed ; for the boy came forward, and, taking Hugh by the hand, led him to his father and presented him as his companion from the West and one desirous of bearing arms in his cause.

Hugh fell on one knee and lightly kissed the hand extended to him.

“ Rise, young sir, we owe you our thanks for your kind and prudent attendance on our son. You would leave the peacefulness of a college life and the delights of study to take a share in the dangers that beset us. We will not say it is well, but your wish shall be gratified. Do you, my son, present your friend to your cousin, the Prince Rupert, and request him, in our name, to place him in his own regiment and immediately about his own person.”

Hugh bowed, and the Prince of Wales led him up to Prince Rupert, who was standing behind the king, and busily talking with Sir John Biron and another officer.

The Prince of Wales thrust Sir John aside, and presented Hugh to his cousin, informing him of the King's wishes.

"Most gladly will I do so," said Rupert, speaking in good English but with a foreign accent. "I like the looks of your young friend."

"He is zealous in our cause," said the Prince, "and is moreover a good judge of dogs and horses. He has pledged himself to secure me the finest gazehound I ever looked upon."

Rupert smiled on his cousin, and, turning to Hugh, said, "You will use all dispatch to procure your arms and accoutrements, and join me at Abingdon, where we purpose to quarter ourselves for the present."

Hugh bowed and retired with the Prince of Wales, who kept him in conversation for some time.

While this was going on, the King made a sign to Hurstmonceaux to approach him.

"Tell us if you can," said he in a whisper, "whom that young man, Hugh de Mohun, so closely resembles as to make us believe that we have known him before."

"I cannot tell your majesty: in figure and in voice he oft reminds me of—of—my master—his Grace of—" said the captain, hesitating.

"Buckingham, you would say," said the King sighing.

"And yet in feature he resembles him not. I have been trying to recall to my mind, among the many ladies with whom his Grace was somewhat"—

The King looked serious and coughed.

"Acquainted—" said the captain demurely, "a face resembling that young man's, but hitherto unsuccessfully."

"You may leave us," said the king, "but should your memory serve you so far as to enable you to recollect the personage to whom we allude, inform us of it."

Hurstmonçeau retired and joined Hugh de Mohun—who then took his leave of the Prince of Wales, and together they left the Chapter-house.

"I congratulate you, Master Hugh," said the captain, "you have not only succeeded in obtaining a commission in the finest troop and under the most daring leader of the whole army, but you will have the benefit of my advice and company, for I am ordered to Abingdon with my regiment."

"It is indeed a matter for congratulation and I am thankful for it," said Hugh.

"But that is not all: you have drawn upon you the particular attention of the King, who, like

myself, fancies that he has, in years gone by, seen and known a face whose features so closely resemble yours that we would fain know to whom it belonged."

"I am sorry I cannot aid his majesty and yourself by informing you of my parent's names; had Master Snelling lived or left behind him any evidences of my parentage, I could have readily solved the mystery that hangs over me. As it is, I must be content to make the name of Hugh de Mohun so respected among men that they may not need to inquire from whom he inherited it."

"A wise resolve, and one which, if kept in view, will not fail to ensure success. But have you no papers of any kind by you that might lead to a discovery? for to say the truth my curiosity is roused and I would gladly gratify it," said the captain.

"I thank you for the interest you take in me; and will gladly shew you the few letters I have at Dunster Castle so soon as I can procure them. They are written in a foreign tongue, and breathe a tone of deep affection, but no signature is attached to any of them," said Hugh.

"Well, procure them as speedily as may be; but

now let us not lose time : I am instructed by the King to see to your immediate outfit, as you must join to-morrow if possible. It is uncertain how soon you may be called upon to act in the field. I think that we shall have but little difficulty in procuring your regimental dress and arms, for there are those who have them to dispose of, having plundered the dead and dying in the field of Edge-hill. For a horse, you are already suited, as Governor Legge has at your disposal any one that you may please to select out of the number that have been brought in from the enemy's camp."

"Shall we to the castle, then, and make our election?" said Hugh.

"Time enough for that when we have procured the other necessities. We will retire for a space to the vintner's, who furnished us with that good Medoc, and over a flagon of it will arrange all that is requisite to be done."

Hugh did not approve of this plan, but was forced to adopt it, for it was of no use to say the captain nay. Accordingly, they reached the Blue Boar, and, while they were sitting over the wine, a tapster was dispatched to summon the captain's

servant. A hint to him, in a short half hour, brought numerous camp-followers to the hostelry, from whom were purchased such articles of armour, offensive and defensive, as furnished Hugh for the field. When he appeared in his costume, fully accoutred, the captain regarded him stedfastly, and then seemed to be plunged in deep thought.

"It will but be civil to call upon Dr. Brent and bid farewell to him," said Hugh, "though, for what reason I know not, he hath ever regarded me with unfavourable eyes. I will to College and tell him of my success, and take my leave of Master Anthony Wood and my servant Perkin Doyle, who shall have orders to dispatch my wearing apparel to Abingdon."

"Go then, but do not tarry, or it will grow too dark to select a horse," said the captain.

Hugh hurried down to Merton, and, as he entered Wood's rooms in his head-piece, cloak and huge jack-boots, the boy did not know him.

"Your hand, Anthony, I am come to say farewell and to ask of you a favour," said Hugh.

"Never, even in Ovid's fables, was there so complete a metamorphosis—but what favour can

Hugh de Mohun ask that Anthony Wood will not grant?"

"Simply that you will accept my books as a present and relieve me of the trouble of disposing of them," said Hugh.

"Too gladly do I accept them—for I am but a poor boy and have no means to purchase so valuable a collection," said Anthony. "But I trust we part not yet."

"I have only time to say—God bless you—I must see the Warden to resign my postmastership to him and declare my intention of quitting college. Then, to select a horse to carry me in the wars, and on his back seek my quarters which, for the present, are to be in Abingdon."

Then farewell, Hugh de Mohun, and do not forget, in your arduous career, your young friend Anthony Wood."

"Farewell, my good boy ; Doyle shall have my orders to put you in possession of all my books," said Hugh as he shook Wood by the hand, who was crying like a child.

To give the necessary orders to Perkin Doyle and make him the joyful owner of such parts of

his apparel as Hugh judged would only prove a useless incumbrance to himself, was the work of but a few minutes. Hugh then sought the lodgings of the Warden, who, like Wood, did not recognize in the well-armed trooper the person of the young student.

"What can an officer in arms have to say to so peaceful man as the Warden of Merton?" he inquired, turning pale—for Brent was already in correspondence with the king's enemies, though not known to be so.

"Merely to bid him farewell," said Hugh, as he removed the steel cap from his brows and revealed his features. "His majesty has given me a post in his army, and I am here to resign to Dr. Brent the postmastership which he so kindly bestowed on me, and to take my leave of him."

"This is somewhat sudden, and I trust that Master Hugh de Mohun hath the sanction of his guardian, Master Luttrell, for this act," said Brent.

"Of that be assured, sir; and so I bid you farewell," said Hugh. "Should my name not be clear upon the college books, an application to

Master Luttrell will meet with immediate attention."

Brent bowed formally, and Hugh left him without the slightest regret.

He returned to the hostelry and found his friend Hurstmonçeau deeply engaged with the host, whom he had invited to share a cup of wine with him. He, however, left as soon as Hugh entered, and went with him to the castle, where they procured an order from Colonel Legge to select a pair of horses for their future use. Hugh chose a powerful black horse, whom he called the Prince, and Hurstmonçeau selected one that bore a close resemblance to Warrener.

CHAPTER V.

"WE will on to Abingdon to-night, for we have nothing to detain us in Oxford, and your zeal to join your regiment will please your commander," said Hurstmonçeau.

"I am ready to accompany you," said Hugh, "as I have given orders to Perkin Doyle to see my baggage conveyed to my quarters."

"On then; we have but about six miles to ride, and, though the road is somewhat hilly, and passes through the thick glades of Bagley, we shall have the broad face of the hunters' moon to assist us with its light," said the captain. "I know, moreover, that the town boasts of a comfortable hostelry, marked by the sign of the Crown and Thistle, out of compliment to the late king: there we will put up for the night: we shall find good fare and a

host renowned for his facetiousness, and his readiness to pledge his guests in his own good liquor.

They rode down the town by the front of Christ-church, and through the South Gate, and crossing over the bridge on which stood Friar Bacon's study, found themselves in some low marshy meadows, through which several branches of the Isis forced their way. Making but slow progress over the little wooden bridges, that had been thrown over these streams, they reached the village of South Hincksey. Passing its little church, they began ascending a short but steep hill, from which they looked back upon the fair city of Oxford, and saw her in all her beauty, under the light of an October moon, which added to the effects of a prospect that is, perhaps, the finest England can boast of. A plunge into a deep dell, and another ascent nearly as steep as the roof of a house, brought the horsemen to the side of Bagley Wood. Broad oaks and luxuriant hollies threw their shade over the rough and narrow pathway, and, had not their beasts been sure of foot, many a huge stone and unbroken flint would have brought both horse and rider to the ground.

When they had cleared the wood and ridden about a mile beyond it, a lovely view opened itself to their gaze; the silvery Isis glided through meadows of the deepest green, and its course was rendered more conspicuous, under the moon's rays, from the gloominess of the wooded sides of Nuneham which impended over it. Before them lay the valley of the White Horse, and beyond it the range of the Berkshire downs, rising one over another, until the highest seemed to be mingled with the few fleecy clouds that skimmed lightly over the surface of the sky.

"This is very beautiful," said Hugh, as he reined up his horse near a princely avenue of elm trees; "yonder hills remind me of the T'orrs of Somerset; I would that I were gazing on them now."

"That sigh proclaims that you would not gaze on them alone, Master Hugh; but away with sentiment for the present! Yonder lights, which shew that we are near to Abingdon, remind me that it is long since I have taken food. Forward, sir! a dash down this hill and a short gallop will soon bring us to the town."

Hugh, who was thinking of Prudence Everard, and wondering whether she was gazing on those Torrs of which the Downs reminded him, deemed his companion a most soulless man for preferring the comforts of a snug inn and a hearty supper to gazing on the fair prospect before him. He, however, dashed down the short but steep hill after him, and before many minutes had elapsed, found himself at the outskirts of the town.

Hurstmonçeau made himself known to the officer of the guard, which was stationed at the farmhouse, called Barton Court, near to which stood the ruins of an ecclesiastical edifice; and obtained from him the pass-word and the service of a soldier to guide them along the banks of two huge fish-ponds, formed to supply the monks of Abingdon with carp and teach on their fasting days. Quitting the meadows, they came to a small, shallow, but rapid stream of water, which ran down the middle of the principal street, and emptied itself into the river Thames, near to the Abbey mills. Making their way along the bed of the rivulet, they passed the abbey gates, the church of St. Nicholas, and the humble grammar-school, and, turning down towards the river,

reached their hostelry, which stood facing a long narrow bridge of stone-work, rudely fashioned, and having niches here and there, shaped like the letter V, into which foot-passengers could retreat to save themselves from being crushed by the vehicles that crossed the bridge.

"What hoh ! hilloah !" shouted Hurstmonceau, "why Master Lindars, you sit there smoking your pipe, and quaffing your liquor, as unconcernedly, as if you were not the host, and cared not to recognise an old customer."

"Most worthy captain, I crave your pardon," said the host, laying aside his pipe, and holding the stirrup for his guest to dismount; "I knew you not, and the arrival of so many of the king's friends and followers this day, has somewhat wearied me. I was but seeking a short relief from toil over a pipe and a tankard."

"Which I will warrant me has lasted since the hour of dinner; but, see that our horses be properly stabled, and give us your company to an early supper," said the captain: "let the hostess be informed that we need apartments for the night."

“Right willingly,” said the host, giving the horses to a man whom he had hailed; “you shall speedily be furnished with a spitchcocked eel from the Abbey streams, whose belly is as silvery as a bright tankard; and a hare fairly run down upon the Berkshire hills, by the greyhounds; full of flavour, and as tender as a spring chicken. As for sleeping apartments, two mercer-men, who have called for nought but vile two-penny ale since here they have been, shall vacate, and give place to their betters, who will consult their own healthfulness, and their host’s interest, by testing the contents of his wine-cellar.”

“This way, Master Hugh, I know the house well,” said the captain, as he led him into a small, but well furnished room, behind the bar; and told the drawer to bring him a cool tankard, which might serve to amuse them while the supper was being prepared. Its contents were scarcely exhausted and the table spread, when the active host entered, bearing the dish of eels, of whose delicacy he had not falsely boasted, and a jugged hare, the perfumes from which would have caused an over-gorged alderman’s mouth to water freely.

The supper ended, huge jugs of cool claret, were placed on the board, and, according to the fashion of the times, flanked by pipes and tobacco. The host enveloped in smoke, told his guests many a merry tale, and sung them many a jovial song, among which, the "dainty widowe of Abingdon," was not forgotten.

Hugh was fatigued and harassed with the excitement of his new position, and, after indulging moderately, retired ; much to the disgust of the captain, who read his host a long lecture on the weakness of youthful heads and the degeneracy of the times ; in which the lecturer cordially agreed with the lecturer. To prove that they were not among the degenerate, they tossed off flagon after flagon, until the captain cried, " Hold, enough ! " and, declaring that he would drink but one more pottle, as a parting cup, when he was safely between the sheets, staggered up to bed.

At early morn, before the sun had shed its rays over the earth, Hugh was roused from his bed, by the harsh sounds of a trumpet. He rose and dressed himself as speedily as he could, and, finding his way into the room where Hurstmonçeau had slept,

awoke him, and told him that he doubted not that their presence was needed in the Abbey, where the troops were quartered.

“ I would that they had mustered somewhat later in the day, for my head feels dizzy from want of sleep,” said the captain, “ but I will rise ; and do you order some one to furnish me with a bucket of cold water from the well ; and rouse our host, that he may supply us with a morning draught.”

Hugh sent up the ostler with a huge pitcher of water, but he had no occasion to rouse the host, whom he found below, taking an early meal, and looking as fresh as if he had not partaken of anything stronger than the small ale he was then drinking, on the night previous. He invited Hugh to partake of his breakfast, which he did not hesitate to do, remembering the captain's advice, never to let pass an opportunity of victualling himself.

“ My friend would have you prepare for him a morning draught, worthy host,” said Hugh, “ but of what it may consist I am wholly ignorant.”

“ Leave that to me, sir ; I know the captain's taste, and will speedily prepare for him some warmed sherry-sack, with a proper admixture of sugar and spices.”

The draught was ready when Hurstmonçeau made his appearance, and, though his hand seemed somewhat unsteady, he raised the cup and drank off the quart of fragrant liquor it held without removing it from his lips.

"Now to horse, Master Hugh!" said the captain.

"Will you not eat something before you ride out?" asked Hugh.

"It has ever been a maxim with me that the stomach of those who use freely the good things bestowed on them, is in a relaxed state and unfitted for the reception of solid food, until it shall have recovered its tone by a gentle stimulant—such as I have now taken—and by breathing the fresh air. We will to our duties, where we shall not, I trust, be detained long, and then return and make our morning meal."

The horses were brought to the door; Hugh and the captain mounted them and rode hastily to the abbey gates, which they entered with many soldiers, officers as well as men, who had obtained accommodations for the night within the town.

"Captain Hurstmonçeau, the prince has been asking for you," said a young officer as they pass-

ed him. "You will find him in yonder meadow. It were well not to delay, for we march immediately the men are mustered."

The captain instantly sought the prince, who bade him put himself at the head of his regiment and make the best of his way to Wallingford; informing him that the king, having left a strong garrison in Oxford, with orders to fortify it more effectually than it had been, was already on his march towards London.

Hurstmonçeau bowed and shook Hugh de Mohun's hand, and, as he did so, whispered to him that he would discharge the host's reckoning as he passed, and trust to fate to provide him with a breakfast.

"You, young sir, will consider yourself one of my aides-de-camp for the present," said the Prince Rupert. "The Prince of Wales, who quitted me but now for the West, bade me remind you to procure for him some dog on which it seems he has set his heart. Now follow me, sir."

In less than an hour all the horse that were to march with the princes were in readiness, their baggage packed on wagons, and the artillery prepared to follow them. Until this moment it had

not occurred to Hugh that he had not received the chest of clothes which he had ordered Perkin Doyle to despatch to him. He mentioned the circumstance to a young man who rode by his side in the prince's suite, who communicated it to his highness.

"Here, sir," said the Prince, calling a trooper from the ranks. "Your name, as I think, is Pearson: as you have lost one master through a sad mischance, it is but fitting that I should provide you with another. You will devote yourself in future to this gentleman."

The man fell back with Hugh de Mohun, who was not a little surprised to see under the steel cap which he wore, the features of Alick Pearson, whom he had known as the groom of the elder Bachell.

"I cannot say how much better I am pleased to have the services of one with whom I am acquainted, than those of a perfect stranger," said Hugh.

"And, having lost my old master, with whom I lived from my infancy, I must deem myself fortunate in having to attend on one whom he loved

so well," said Alick. "I knew of your being in the service, sir," by seeing a chest directed to you here. I have caused it to be stowed away in the same wagon that bears the prince's goods."

This information relieved Hugh of much anxiety; and, while the final arrangements for the march were being made, he took an opportunity of questioning Alick on his reasons for not having quitted the army after his master's death and returned to Ashley-Combe.

"And wherefore should I return, sir?—There be some animals that form attachments to places and not to persons: it is not so with me. I loved my old master, and his son too—but when Master Julian forgot his duty to his father and his God, I ceased to love him. He broke his father's heart, sir, and Hurstmonçeau's rapier did but anticipate what his son's defection would shortly have effected."

"Still, Alick, there was one, or I am mistaken, whose presence at Ashley-Combe would have induced your return thither," said Hugh.

"I will not pretend to mistake your meaning, sir," said Alick, looking sorrowfully. "I was af-

fianced to Janet Hodge and would gladly have made her my wife; but being foster-sister to Master Julian, she took in bad part some observations which I made upon his conduct, and left me and her aged father, who did not long survive her loss, to take service in the family of Master Pym—she that hated a roundhead as she did the devil has even entered into the devil's service at last."

"Nay be not angry, Alick; Pym is not a bad man, although he is a rebellious subject. Fall in, for that trumpet announces that our march has begun!"

Alick fell into his place in the ranks, and Hugh galloped up to the Prince, who, with his brother Maurice, had placed himself at the head of his small but well-mounted and well-disciplined force.

As soon as they were clear of the town and had crossed a ferry at Culham, they advanced at a rapid trot to another ferry at Sutton Courtney, and then passing through Appleford and one of the Moretons, reached Wallingford, leaving the baggage-wagons and artillery to follow as soon as they could.

Some hours elapsed after the Prince had reach-

ed Wallingford and made arrangements for his troops within the precincts of the castle, but nothing was heard or seen of the baggage and the guns. As the country people were known to be generally unfavourable to the King's cause from the misrepresentations, purposely made by the parliamentarians, of the cruelty exercised by his forces on their marches, Prince Rupert, fearing that an attack might have been made upon his baggage, sent Hurstmonceaux with a small party of men to ascertain how matters stood. Hugh de Mohun applied for and easily obtained leave to accompany him.

"This, Master Hugh, is a mere work of supererogation, as we call it in our church—a sad waste of time and horse-flesh," said the captain.

"How mean you? surely the caring for our baggage and artillery cannot be a wasting of our time," replied Hugh.

"You are but young, and have seen no service as yet; trust me, who know our men well, when I tell you that we shall find waggons, and tumbrels baggage and guns, with it may be a few women and children to guard them, while the men are busily

foraging for themselves in the neighbouring villages and farm-houses," said the captain.

"Such a breach of discipline would not be permitted to pass unpunished," said Hugh:

"I know not that," answered the captain, "Prince Rupert and his brother Maurice will forgive a soldier for furnishing himself with meat and drink, and it may be a purse of money, provided that when he is in the fight he does his duty as a man. As I guessed, see—yonder are our wains and guns left to themselves and the rogues have gone so far in their coolness as to loose the horses and allow them to browse in the adjacent meadows. We will ride for yon village, where I doubt not we shall find our fellows busied with the ale-can and such provisions as they can lay their hands on."

Hugh followed the captain over hedge and ditch, until they gained the little village of Brightwell without having been seen by the soldiers, who were busily employed in dividing a miscellaneous lot of plunder on the green turf before the village ale-house. There were turkeys, geese, ducks, and fowls; little pigs and large, sheep and calves, all of which had been slain in a most unbutcherly

manner. Kegs of all sizes and sorts, containing wine, beer, and metheglin, were heaped up among articles of furniture and dress, which were not likely to prove serviceable in a camp. Most of the men were intoxicated, and many were quarrelling and swearing awfully as they disputed with one another about the possession of some worthless article.

"How now, sirrahs," said Hurstmonceau, suddenly appearing amongst them. "Unless you wish to be shot like dogs as you are, you will to your posts, and make your way as speedily as may be to Wallingford."

A scramble took place for what each could secure as his share of the plunder before him, and the ground was speedily cleared of the rude soldiery.

"Now, my friends," said the captain, addressing the country-people who had been standing at a distance, and viewing the disposal of their property with saddened hearts, "do you recover such of your property as these fellows may have left behind them, and thank your stars that you fell not into the hands of the king's foes, who ever make it a practice to plunder first, and then

skin alive, all who are not in arms with them. Master Host, here is wherewith to enable you to bring out a hogshead of your best, that these good folks may drink to the health of their king."

So saying, the captain tossed the publican a piece of gold, and rode away amidst the cheers of the plundered villagers. He then saw the wagons and tumbrels in motion, and hurried back to the Prince to assure him of their safety, alleging, in excuse for their not having arrived before, the badness of the roads and the steepness of the hills.

Hugh, thinking he was but doing his duty, acquainted the Prince with the real cause of the delay—but the Prince merely smiled and said that it was no wonder the men were anxious to provide themselves with food, seeing that they had been nearly starved in the northern counties.

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where he saved the life of Colonel Baggot, whom Prince Rupert appointed governor of the town after its surrender.

Hurstmonceaux, who, although he was a captain of a company of foot, served as a volunteer in Prince Rupert's Dragoons, was greatly attached to Hugh de Mohun, and gave him as much of his company as circumstances would allow him to do. As he had been a man of war from his youth, having entered the army immediately after the Duke of Buckingham's murder, Hugh derived great benefit from his experience, and would have felt a deep respect for him, had it not been for his excessive love of wine and other creature-comforts, in which he never failed to indulge whenever an opportunity of doing so presented itself to him. As Hugh would not join him in these excesses, but even ventured to expostulate with him on the folly and impropriety of his conduct, it generally happened that the argument ended, in the captain's getting very much intoxicated, to show his contempt for the opinion of a mere boy, who thought that a single quart of claret at one sitting was enough for a gentleman ; and in Hugh showing, by the cold-

ness of his looks and the stiffness of his carriage, his disapprobation of his companion's conduct.

The following morning, however, generally found them as good friends as ever, for the captain, after a grave lecture on the crime of drunkenness, which, in spite of his attempts to look serious, always excited Hugh's laughter, would hint to him a hope that "a few years campaigning would teach him the propriety of being a *bon camarado*, and not limiting his draughts, to so paltry a measure as one quart of Bordeaux—a practice only fit for a puritan."

It was on a bright evening in June, when Hugh sallied forth from the town of High Wickham, or, as it is now spelt, Wycombe; which Prince Rupert had assailed and successfully. That day a great quantity of valuable goods had been seized, and many prisoners had been taken: all the prisoners had been put under Hugh de Mohun's charge, with orders to conduct them to Oxford at dawn on the following morning. Hurstmonceaux had received orders to assist him in their safe removal, and as they had had a hard day's service, under a burning sun, Hugh ordered his men to their quarters at

an early hour, and proposed to the captain to retire early themselves, that they might be refreshed and ready to set out on their march to Oxford, at the hour indicated to them by the Prince.

Hurstinonçeau had expressed his willingness to comply with Hugh's wishes, and had accompanied him to the house of a country gentleman, well disposed to the king, which stood within half a mile of the town; with the full intention of seeking his bed at once, for he was really worn out with the day's exertions. He saw the horses committed to the care of Alick Pearson, properly stabled, and well fed. In passing through the hall, however, the captain suddenly remembered, that he was exceedingly thirsty, having taken nothing since he left the inn, which was then known by the sign of the Red Lion.

"Pish, sir," said Hugh, "you will find a supply of water in your room: drink freely of it, that it may qualify the wine, which you swallowed but half an hour since."

"Water undiluted I never drink, young man; I have, as it were, a horror of imbibing therewith certain animalculæ, called tadpoles, or frogs in a state of puerility. I have ever made it a practice

to add a dash of something alcoholic, to kill those noxious creatures, before I apply my lips to it," said the captain.

"Do for once be satisfied with what would make another man intoxicated," said Hugh; "or, if you must drink, summon the butler and order a draught of his mildest ale."

"I will question him as to his resources," said the captain, leading the way to the butler's room, as if by instinct; "our worthy host is with the Prince, or we should not be left thus to seek for refreshment."

The butler, an aged man, who had lived in the family for years, would not hear of his master's guests drinking anything so weak as small ale; but, having conducted them to the dining-hall, placed before them the best that the cellars afforded.

"By my faith, Master Hugh," said Hurstmonceaux, "this Burgundy is as fine as if it had not been exposed to the dangers of a sea voyage, which is apt to make it pricked."

"It is most excellent," said Hugh, "and, having tasted of it to oblige our ancient friend here, I will retire and beg of you to accompany me."

One goblet more will not harm you ; drink again, and I will readily go with you," said the captain.

" You ought to know me by this time, and to be aware that, when I say no to a proposition, I mean it as a negative," said Hugh.

" I know you to be a pragmatist—but I will not be angry ; I will but put a few questions to our friend here, and will follow you with all speed," said the captain, half offended.

" Well, I wish you a pleasant carouse, sir," said Hugh, " and do you, master butler, fill your largest flagon at once ; for Captain Hurstmonçeau will weary your aged limbs, if you fetch up his liquor for him in single pottles," said Hugh, as he strode to the door, and closed it after him.

" Ay, go, for all that I care," said the captain : " He is a pretty young man, sir ; and, when a few more years, passed in active service, shall have taught him the value of such wine as this, he will not skulk off to his bed, leaving the cup unfinished : I will trouble you but for one cup more, as we must be up and stirring at early dawn, to convey the Roundhead knaves, the prey to our swords and spears, to the good city of Oxford."

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valiant and redoubtable colonel! I judged, that you could not resist the combined allurements of wine and music. Up, sir butler, thou prince of the spigot, replenish—replenish and be speedy,” hiccupped the captain, far more intoxicated than Hugh had ever before seen him.

“I will not permit such conduct as this and in the house of a stranger. Do you retire, sir, and leave me to expostulate with this gentleman.”

The aged butler seemed but too glad to be relieved from his unpleasant situation and, as soon as he had left the room, Hugh told the captain that, unless he immediately retired, he should feel it his duty to report his conduct to the Prince.

“That for the Bohemian boy!” said the valiant captain, snapping together the finger and thumb of his left hand, while he with difficulty raised the flagon to his lips with his right. “I drink to the health of his Grace of Bucking—but no, no, I am oblivious—I would that he were here to taste this Burgundy—it is of the flavour that he loved—he was a man! you are marvellously like him in voice and in figure, but a mere milk-sop—a

very coward when joy and revelry are rife. I must convert you from the error of your ways, Master Hugh, and we will begin the task at once; seize a hold on yon flask and fill me this flagon, and then toss off its contents at a draught to the health of the worthy duke or—any body else whom it may please you to prefer to him.”

“The flasks are all drained and shall not be replenished this night,” said Hugh.

“You assume, sir, you assume—did not Master Dashwood bid us use his house as though it were our own? I will to his cellars in person, if needs be: I have a nose for scenting out the best bins,” said the captain, as he rose with the intention of making his way to the lower regions. “How now? what ails thee man? it was not wont to be thus with thee?” continued the captain, addressing himself, “do thy legs refuse to do their office? By my faith! I believe thou art drunk, very drunk Master Hurstmonceau; and yet I have known thee drink deeper, and with impunity.”

“Come, sir,” said Hugh, “while you have strength left to accomplish the task come with me to your bed.”

“Most willingly—for, to say the truth, I feel

a-weary with my day's exertions—but steady, my young friend, steady—if you reel about thus with me, I shall never mount these stairs—Burgundy is a good and wholesome liquor, Master Hugh, but it suits not young stomachs and unpractised heads, if taken in excess—you ought to have adhered to Bordeaux, sir, in which case you would not have required me to assist you to your couch. Recline, good youth, recline, and sleep off the effects of your excesses—I will lay me down here and watch over you as tenderly as a nurse," said the captain, as he with Hugh's help, threw himself on his bed, and sunk into a state of unconsciousness.

Before the sun was up Hugh rose, and, put himself at the head of the troops, who were to guard the prisoners, amounting to nearly twelve hundred men, to Oxford. He left Alick Pearson behind him to assist Hurstmonçeau, who was in so deep a slumber that he could not rouse him from it, and to bring him on his way as soon as he should be able to mount his horse.

The duty which Hugh had to perform was likely to be attended with danger, as he had to pass

with his prisoners between Lord Essex's which were quartered at Thame, and another of the parliamentarians that were stationed at Watlington. He was furnished with guides who led him through lanes but seldom used, except the farmers whose lands abutted on them. Keeping the strictest silence, and hidden by the hedgerows that overshadowed these lanes, he proceeded safely until he came to a large field, which gave him a view of the village of Watlington and a bridge over the Thame river, the other side of which a re-inforcement from the garrison of Oxford had been ordered to meet him and relieve him of a part of his charge. He proceeded on, therefore, to reach the bridge which was about two miles distant, but before he had accomplished a fourth of the way, Hurstmonceaux, feeling thoroughly ashamed of himself, rode up to him and pointed to a powerful body of horse coming towards them from the direction of a hamlet called Pyrton which is near to Watlington.

"On, on, sir," said the captain; "push forward to the bridge, and leave me to oppose these men who, as I have reason to believe, led on by John I

den, who on this very field first showed his rebellious spirit. He is bitter against the king and of a fierce temper, and, like Cinna of old, has a head to contrive, a tongue to persuade, and a hand to execute any mischief."

"Forward, sir, with all speed," said Alick Pearson. "See your prisoners safely over the bridge, and fear not that we can keep these men engaged until the Prince, who is close behind us, watching the movements of Lord Essex's foot, comes up to our aid."

Hugh pushed on and, when he had delivered up the prisoners to the party who had been sent from Oxford to meet him, rode back as speedily as he could to Chalgrove field, where a fierce battle was raging. He saw the Prince, as usual, in the thickest of the fight, and forced his way towards him. It was with the greatest difficulty that he effected his purpose, for friends as well as foes obstructed his way, so closely were they jammed together, fighting hand to hand.

"On, on, Hugh de Mohun; we must be quick, for should Essex come up with his foot before we have got rid of these foes, we shall be outnumbered

and cut off," said Hurstmonçeau as he assisted Hugh to make his way to the Prince. See, sir, he is close beset, and by Master Hampden himself, who fights more like a demon than a man. I would that I had a pistol undischarged to put a stop to his career."

"Follow me," said Hugh as he made a desperate rush towards the Prince and drew one of the huge pistols that he bore in his holsters.

"Fire low, Hugh, fire low," shouted the captain as he saw him raise the weapon. The shot took effect in the shoulder, and Hampden backing his horse rode slowly away leaning over his saddle-bows.

"He has it—but may live to recover his wounds;—upon him," said the captain.

Hugh threw away his pistol, and again drawing his sword pressed on after Hampden, but a body of gentlemen had thrown themselves before him to secure his retreat, and Hugh, rushing on the nearest, was speedily so fully engaged in protecting himself as not to be able to observe what was going on around him.

"Yield thee, thou base-born man!" shouted a

voice near to him, in tones so closely resembling those which he had heard at St. Leonard's well, and in the keep of Dunster Castle, as to thrill through him and for a moment paralyze him.

"Yield thee, I say: you have slain this day one who was a light in Israel, and thus I avenge him."

Hugh had but time to ward off the blow that was aimed at his head, and before he could return it, he felt his horse sinking under him from the thrust of a pike which had pierced his side. His adversary spurred his horse to attack him at the moment, and his beast, stumbling over Hugh's dying animal, threw his rider heavily to the ground.

Hugh disengaged himself as quickly as he could, and had scarcely time to gain his legs before he was again vigorously attacked by the same foe. Long and severe was the struggle between them for both were young, both strong, active, and well skilled in the use of their weapons. Although they were separated more than once by the other combatants, still they met again and renewed the fight with greater ardour. Hugh was enraged at finding himself so hotly pressed by his foe, and, exerting all his strength to rid himself of him, made a blow

at his head. His sword lighted on the steel and was shivered to pieces in his hand. To strike with his enemy was now his only chance. He avoided his uplifted sword, and, rushing at him, seized him round the body and together they rolled on the ground.

Hugh felt a weapon pierce his side and, as he was withdrawn and he found a faintness coming over him, he heard a voice—the same dreaded voice—say in his ear—“Hugh de Mohun, Julian Basset is avenged, and Prudence Everard will be glutted by a connection with the base-born.”

CHAPTER IX.

HURSTMONCEAU and Alick Pearson, saw Hugh de Mohun fall. They rushed to save him, but arrived too late.

"I will avenge thee, my friend," shouted the captain, as he made his horse bound over a heap of the slain and raised his sword to strike Julian Bachell, as he was in the act of withdrawing his dagger from Hugh's side. His stooping position left him fully exposed to the impending blow, and Julian would not have lived to exult over his victory, had not a tall, ungainly trooper pushed his horse in between him and the captain, and received the blow of his uplifted sword upon his pike. By the weight of the powerful horse on which he was mounted, he forced the captain's charger upon its haunches, and nearly unseated its rider.

"It is that rebel, Roger Priver; I know by the marks that Will Bowering hath left up face," said Alick, as he struggled to reach him in the rush of horsemen, however, separated and Alick dismounted to examine his wounds.

"Undo his corslet," said the captain, "pulse still beats, and if we can but starve him with wounds and bear him from the field, he may yet be saved. Should I lose thee, Hugh, I deem this victory dearly bought."

Alick speedily stripped his master, and laid bare his side from which a stream of dark blood was welling fast.

"It is an ugly wound," said Hurstmoor, "and had it been dealt on the left side, life would have been extinct ere this. Take my sword and bind it tightly round him, while I go for aid."

While this was passing, Julian Bachell had covered his horse, mounted it, and rode away from the scene of his successful struggle, followed by Roger Priver; for they were hotly pursued by Prince Rupert and his dragoons, who had galloped

a complete victory and were driving the enemy before them thoroughly discomfited.

"On, on, Master Priver," said Julian, "put not your trust in aught but the speed of your good horse.

"I would fain strike another blow," said Priver reining in his horse. "The blood of a malignant is a more acceptable offering to the Lord than that of bulls and of goats."

"On, sirrah, I command you," said Julian; "yon-der, if I err not, is Master Hampden; let us see to his state. It will be a consolation to him to know that my dagger has done its work on the man who wounded him. That one blow hath avenged him, and rid me of a man whom I detested as heartily as I once loved him."

"There will be weeping and wailing in the house of Luxborough; and she, who is the last of that malignant brood, will, I doubt not, refuse to be comforted; for she loved the youth dearly," said Priver.

"On, sirrah!" shouted Julian, as he drove his spurs into his horse's flanks and made for a narrow lane that led from Chalgrove field towards Pyrton

house. He did not draw rein until he came up with a group of gentlemen who were slowly accompanying an officer from the field. He seemed severely wounded, and, was supported on his horse by two who rode beside him.

"How fares it with Master Hampden?" asked Julian of one of the party.

"Badly hurt; yet we trust not mortally," replied the gentleman whom he had addressed. "He hath still possession of his senses and, if you have aught of information to communicate, he will hear it. Way there, for Master Bachell!"

Julian rode through the press to Hampden's side, and saw the blood trickling through his armour down his thighs, and his arm hanging powerless on the saddle-bow.

"You are sadly wounded I fear Sir," said he; "but, if it be any satisfaction to you to know it, be assured that he who fired that shot will never fire another."

"Know you the man that inflicted this heavy blow on the good cause?" asked one of those who were supporting Hampden.

"I do," said Julian. "The shot was fired by

the young Hugh de Mohun, who was once my friend, while he studied under the roof of the malignant Luttrells of Dunster Castle. He will, as I have said, never fire another shot, for I drove my dagger deeply into his side."

"Alas, alas!" said Hampden in so feeble a voice that he could only be heard by those who were close to him; "alas! alas! that civil rage should carry men thus far! that one friend should exult in having caused the death of another; but care not for me, Master Bachell, my sun is nigh to its setting: do you away, as speedily as may be, to the Lord Essex, and report to him our entire defeat. Tell him that I die a true servant of the Parliament, and bid him—but I feel faint, he will know how to—"

Ere Hampden could complete the sentence, he fell into the arms of his friends.

"Leave us, Sir," said one of them. "We will bear our friend to his home, and see that his wounds be dressed; do you hasten to inform the general of the loss which the good cause hath sustained."

Julian turned away, and fully believing that Hamp-

den was dead, rode as hastily as he could, followed by Roger Priver, to the spot where the infantry were advancing to the battle-field, led on by Lord Essex.

"What news bring you, Sir?" said Essex, as Julian rode up to him and saluted him. "They be bad if your face be an index to your thoughts."

"I have sore tidings to convey, your Excellency."

"Be concise, Sir, we have no time to waste for the selection of phrases," said Essex sternly.

"The prisoners taken at Wickham have not been recovered: they are on their way to Oxford under a strong escort from the King's garrison: our horse has been routed and many of our men slain and among them—"

"Well, Sir?" said Essex impatiently.

"And among them, Colonel Hampden," said Julian.

"How know you that?" enquired Essex.

"I saw the shot fired, and killed him who fired it with my dagger. I followed Hampden from the field, and saw him die in his friends' arms, after he had bidden me ride hither to inform you of our de-

feat, and to assure you that he died a faithful servant of the Parliament," said Julian.

"His loss will be a severe blow to our friends in London," said Essex sadly; "but I will avenge him: the Lord is on our side, and will not suffer our enemies to triumph over us. Forward, gentlemen." The officers whom he had addressed fell into their respective places and led their men on at a rapid march. Essex detained Julian by his side to question him on the events he had witnessed.

They were marching along a narrow lane, and were already within half a mile of Chalgrove field when their further progress was prevented by some score of troopers who were galloping towards them from the field as speedily as their horses could carry them, and were followed by Prince Rupert himself, at the head of a small party of his dragoons who, as soon as they saw the main body of infantry before them, wheeled round, and left the lane for the open field.

"Halt!" said Essex, "and let us hear what further news these men, who are fleeing thus disorderly from the battle, bring us."

A few questions put to the leader corroborated Julian's statement that all was lost ; but Essex pressed on in the hope of avenging on the prince the losses and disgrace which he had sustained. When he reached the scene of the fight, however, it was only to find the field covered with the dead and the wounded ; for Prince Rupert, on the approach of the infantry, had hastily collected his men together, and ridden off, with the prisoners that he had taken, over the bridge towards Oxford.

Lord Essex called a council and consulted upon the best mode of proceeding. It had been his intention to march towards Oxford, and lay siege to it in form ; but this defeat had so disheartened his troops, many of whom were suffering from sickness, that he changed his plans, and resolved to fall back towards London, and quarter his army about St. Alban's until their strength should be recruited.

As soon as he had come to this resolution, he gave orders to that effect. The soldiers were allowed an hour for rest and refreshment, and Essex employed the time in writing a dispatch to the parliament, to inform them of the defeat of the cavalry, his future plans, and the death of Hamp-

den, of which he could not doubt from Julian's report; although he afterwards discovered that he was still alive, but with small hopes of recovering from his wounds.

This dispatch he gave into the hands of Julian, and bade him ride, as speedily as he could, to London, and place it in the hands of Master John Pym, with a request that he would at once lay its contents before the parliament.

Julian and Roger Priver mounted fresh horses, and, avoiding the main roads, made the best of their way towards Uxbridge, where they procured a relay, and, without refreshing themselves, proceeded on their journey. Nothing occurred to impede their progress, until they reached Bayswater, where Julian's horse threw a shoe. It was necessary to apply to a shoeing smith, who fortunately dwelt near to the only hostelry the little village boasted of. While the farrier was engaged in replacing the shoe, Julian took the refreshment of which he stood in need, for he had been early in the saddle, and had not tasted food for many hours. Roger Priver was allowed to join him in the humble meal that was placed before them, and

both master and man did justice to the dish of eggs and bacon, with which the host supplied them.

As the smith was not willing to deprive his neighbour, the host, of a chance of getting as much profit as he could out of his two customers, he did not hurry himself in replacing the thrown shoe. Julian had ample leisure, therefore, to finish his meal and, according to the fashion of the times, puritan though he was, to enjoy a pipe of tobacco, with a few extra glasses of powerful ale, for which the hostelry of Bayswater was celebrated.

Julian's habits were temperate, nay, almost abstemious, and the ale, aided by his long ride, and the heat of the day, affected him so much that when he mounted his horse and rode towards London, he felt so greatly excited, that Roger Priver ventured to expostulate with him, and assure him that his appearance and conduct coincided so closely with that of the royalists as to be likely to prove offensive.

"I tell thee this, Master Wool-comber, if that tongue of thine wags any more to the same tune, the head that holds it shall feel the weight of my

tuck. Silence, sirrah ! and fall back ; you assume too much," said Julian in so angry a tone, and with so fierce a look, that Priver drew bit and let him ride on some twenty paces in advance of him, nor did he venture to approach nearer or make a remark until they reached Derby House, where he took the bridle from his master, and led the horses round to their stables when Julian had dismounted.

" News, news, Master Pym," said Julian, as he entered the room in which the family generally sat when they did not wish to be intruded upon.

" Bad or good ?" asked Pym, looking up from a bundle of papers that he had been perusing.

" It is difficult to guess, father ;" said Agatha, who had risen to greet Julian, " for Master Bachall wears a gloomy brow, and yet there is the excitement of triumph in his step."

" My news, like the passages in a man's life, are of a mixed nature," said Julian, as, not noticing the proffered hand of Agatha, he bowed to her in so jaunty a manner as to astonish her. " But, read, sir ; I am the bearer of this packet from his excellency the Earl of Essex."

ed Julian, shewing amazement in

"The rumour has reached me
hour, but with the particulars I
ted," said Pym, as he proceeded
read Essex's dispatch.

"Cursed be the horse that th
doubly cursed be the man that del
replacing it!" said Julian, in a t
Pym and his family gazed at him

"Why stand you all staring up
were demented?" he asked. "Is
very surprising that I should sho
not having executed the task set
to be the first to convey these ti
of the Commons house of Parlian
another should have been before
Master Pym of the death of his

"He lies that told thee so," said Julian.

"Hampden dead?" said Mistress Pym and Agatha, who had not even heard of his having been wounded.

"Dead, ay, and cold ere this. I saw him dying in his friends' arms as they bore him from the battle-field," said Julian, "but I thank God that he did not die unavenged."

"You speak in riddles," said Agatha, laying her hand upon his arm. "The excitement of the morning and the length of your ride have proved too much for you."

"Master Pym," said Julian, throwing Agatha's hand aside, and not regarding her words, "I have slain the man who shot your friend to death; hah! hah!—this dagger which pierced his side is even now moist with his blood."

Mistress Pym and her daughter shuddered and drew back, as Julian partly drew his dagger from its sheath.

"You had better retire," said Pym to his wife and child, "while I converse with Julian in private. Tales of the battle-field are not suited to the ears of women."

"No—no—let them stay," said Julian, "It will gratify me to see their joy at hearing that my dagger pierced the heart of—"

"Whom?" asked Agatha, "whom, Julian? I see by your manner that he was no ordinary man whom you slew—his name?"

"Hugh de Mohun," said Julian slowly and with so fearful a gleam of joy on his face, that even Pym recoiled from him.

"Hugh de Mohun! the friend of your youth? and you exult over his death as though you had never loved him!" said Agatha.

"I hated him," said Julian, and he shook his fist and ground his teeth together. "I hated him with a hatred too deep to be described."

"And wherefore?" asked the fair girl as she gazed tremblingly upon him.

"Because he, an unknown, the mere bastard of as I believe, of some courtly dame, dared to cross my path and rob me of the affections of a fair girl, the companion of my childhood. Oh, Prudence Everard! had you but listened to his vows, Julian Bachell would not have been the base thing he is—a rebel in arms against his king, the asso-

ciate of a set of hypocrites, and the murderer of his father and of him whom he once called his friend."

"Let us go, mother," said Agatha, who had nearly fainted, but successfully struggled against her feelings—"Let us go, I beseech you."

Pym motioned to his wife to leave the room, and when he and Julian were left alone, he sharply demanded of him the reason of his thus cruelly insulting his daughter, by alluding to a passion for another.

"Hark you, Master Pym; *king* Pym, as your sycophants call you—talk not to a gentleman as though he were a hired servant. I will not be schooled by such as you, who have risen to a dangerous height by means that other men would blush to rise by. The blood of the murdered Strafford—the—"

"Leave me, leave my house," said Pym, "and that instantly—I would have loved thee—would have given you my greatest treasure—but now—"

"Say no more, the blood of a Bachell would refuse to mingle with that of a rebel's daughter," said Julian as he rushed from the room.

CHAPTER X.

PYM was so astonished at Julian's conduct, that he attributed it to madness. He felt stunned, as it were, with surprise and grief. The dispatches of Lord Essex fell from his hand, as he sank into a chair and vainly endeavoured to account for the insults that had been so wantonly inflicted on himself, his party, and his beloved daughter, by one whom he had long treated as a son.

Julian, in the mean while, rushed back to the stables, and ordered Priver to replace the saddles and bridles, which he had but just removed, and to lead out the horses.

"Where now?" said Priver, "we have had enough of the saddle for one day, I think."

"Keep your thoughts for a more fitting time, sirrah! and do as I bid you," said Julian.

"If we are to go back to the General, it would be well to leave our own jaded beasts, and select two of Master Pym's best: they have nought else to do, but to bear him and his followers hence to Westminster and back again."

"I will have nought of Master Pym's," said Julian. "Saddle those same horses that bore us hither, and see you lose no time, lest you feel the weight of my displeasure."

Roger Priver stood as erect as a post, and, in a drawling tone, proposed to be informed of the reason of their sudden departure, before he obeyed the orders given him in so peremptory a manner.

"D——n, Sirrah!" said Julian, "do you dare to argue with me? saddle the horses immediately, or take the consequences of refusing to obey your officer."

As Julian spoke these words, he drew his tuck, and approached Priver, with so angry a look that the Woolcomber felt he was in earnest. He uttered a low whistle, lifted up his hands in amazement, and muttering, not loudly enough to be heard, "He sweareth like a cavaliero—he is mad!" set about the duties imposed upon him.

"Now, mount and follow," said Julian, as he sprung upon his horse's back, and dashed along the rough roads which led towards the little village of Kensington. He did not draw bridle, until he had crossed Hounslow heath, and reached a small hostelry, known by the sign of the "Three Magpies." He dismounted at the door, threw his bridle to Priver, and bidding him see the horses well fed, strode into a little parlour near the door, and ordered the host to furnish him with refreshments, and to see that he was not intruded upon by any one.

Here we must leave him for the present, and return to Oxford.

"How feel you now, Master Hugh? you have had an uninterrupted slumber of some five hours' duration, and, I trust, are the better for it," said Captain Hurstmonçeau to his young friend, who was slowly recovering from his wound, in a small room of the hostelry known by the sign of the Blue Boar, whither he had been conveyed, by the Captain's orders, from Chalgrove field.

"I am sure he is better, for a bright smile is on his face;" said Anthony Wood, who had taken

his turn with the Captain, Alick Pearson, and Perkin Doyle, in watching by Hugh's side.

Hugh, who was forbidden to speak by his surgeons, smiled, and pressed Anthony's hand to his lips.

"That smile confirms your words, my long-legged friend. The crisis is passed—the fever hath fled, and Hugh de Mohun is saved to us. *Deo gratias*. I would that Hugh, could join us in a bottle of our host's Medoc; but, as it is prohibited, I will e'en drink a cup of it myself, to his speedy restoration to strength."

Hugh shook his head, at hearing this.

"I understand your meaning my young friend," said the Captain, "but I have been over abstemious of late, fearing lest I might exceed in my potations, and slumber at my post. I pledge you my word, that one honest quart shall be my portion, and not a drop more. Of that small allowance, Master Wood, shall have his share, and if my brain be affected by so slight a draught, it is time that I should give up the wine-cup, and take to the undiluted element."

Alick Pearson, who had been ordered by the



with him.

“I would have
soldier, you are
As your master
acting, I may call
his garrison—fly

Alick, seeing
about to obey, w
and the surgeons
bucking glance up
him, and presse
hint to him to be

“Pish!” said I
sound of a friend’s
ment, would profi

tended only for the ears of Anthony Wood and Alick Pearson, but the surgeons heard them, and scowled darkly on the speaker. They then went through the usual processes of feeling the pulse, and examining the tongue, of their patient, previously to inspecting, and dressing his wound.

"Wonderful!" said one of them, "the pulse beats regularly, and the tongue is as clean as a healthy child's. The fever is subdued. We must thank our stars, that we have had to deal with a strong constitution."

"Or rather," said the other, "we must thank the *pulvis antimonii* which hath wrought wonders."

"Or rather," said Perkin Doyle, who had followed the surgeons, into the room, and taken his place behind the Captain, "we must thank my former master, Gilbert Dynes, for not having emptied the phial left for his use, by one Aaron Graveboys, who visited him in his illness. I witnessed its miraculous effects upon him, and gave Master Hugh de Mohun a dose of it, last night, on my own responsibility."

"You ought to have apprized me of your intention before administering the drug—no man

should act without orders—" said the Captain, "but see—they are examining the wound which, I think, must be healing, seeing that Mohun does not groan or wince as they remove the dressings."

"A most healthy appearance!" said one of the surgeons, "I never treated a case more successfully."

"A few more applications of the same *unguentum*, which, you will be pleased to recollect, was administered at my suggestion, will, I fear not, soon enable our patient to leave his bed," said the other.

"Doubtless—if aided by the cooling mixtures which I ordered to be exhibited internally. But we will question our patient, as to his feelings," said the first.

Hugh, replied to their questions, by saying, that, he was free from pain, and felt nothing except an intense desire to eat and drink of something more satisfactory to the appetite than the broths upon which he had lately lived.

"A chicken, and a goblet of pure Medoc, for instance," said the Captain; "a mere half-pint as a commencement."

"I should like it above all things," said Hugh, "for I really feel faint from the want of something nourishing."

"Huzzah!" said the Captain, "your wants shall be supplied, though all the surgeons in the king's army, said me nay. Alick! Perkin Doyle! fly and order the host to furnish a chicken, and a supply of his best claret forthwith."

The two surgeons looked at the Captain, and then at one another. Then they whispered together, dressed Hugh's wound afresh, felt his pulse and examined his tongue again. After that, they consulted in whispers, and at last confessed that, through their united exertions, he was so far recovered that they might venture to allow him to eat a small portion of chicken, and drink a little wine, largely diluted with water.

Hurstmonceau gravely promised to attend to their orders, and bowed them out of the room.

Alick Pearson, brought in a tray furnished with the eatables that had been ordered, and Perkin followed him with a huge flagon of claret.

"Now, Master Hugh," said the Captain, "eat, but eat sparingly—for I have ever found, that solid food is detrimental to the stomach of those,

who are suffering from the effects of cold steel—wine is a diluent, and will not harm you.”

“I will drain a goblet of it, before I taste of the solids, then,” said Hugh, “for I am as thirsty as you would feel on the morning following a night’s deep drinking.”

“I have hopes of him yet,” said Hurstmonçeau, as Hugh took a goblet from his hands, and drained it “He will take his wine as a gentleman should do, when a few more years shall have passed over his head.”

“Now I will trouble you for a slice of bread, and a limb of the pullet,” said Hugh.

Anthony Wood, in his zeal to satisfy his friend’s appetite, had already divided the chicken, and now placed one half of it, with a huge manchet of bread in his hands ; for which he was sternly rebuked by the Captain, who accused him of not having listened to, or despised, his remarks on the dangerous nature of solids, when taken in excess by those who were suffering from sword or dagger wounds.

Hugh ate so eagerly that Wood was afraid he would injure himself, but he was relieved from his fears by Hurstmonçeau, who, quietly removed the eatables beyond his reach, and, having sup-

plied him with another goblet of wine, bade him go to sleep, while he and Anthony finished the small modicum of wine with which the host had supplied them.

Hugh soon dozed off, under the united effects of the wine and the drug administered to him by Perkin Doyle. The Captain took an honest quart of claret and amused himself by smoking a pipe, and abusing Master Longshanks, as he called Wood, for refusing to share the wine with him.

While Anthony was doing his best to excuse himself by pleading the weakness of his stomach, and head, Alick Pearson, came in, and told the Captain, that some one was below who wished to see Master Hugh de Mohun, as he had important news to communicate to him.

"Who is he? hath he not a name?" said the Captain.

"He is a stranger to you, Sir; but I know him well, and know him to be one whom my master would gladly see, as he comes from the West, and, doubtless, brings tidings from friends in that quarter."

"Admit him, Alick—admit him, and, as he must

be dry after his journey, bid the host to supply us with another quart of wine," said the Captain, "and do you, Master Longshanks, seek your bed in Merton College, lest Dr. Brent punish you for being out late."

Anthony Wood reluctantly left the room, as Pearson ushered in Giles Tudball, who was dressed as a pedlar, and bore his pack on his shoulders.

"Why, how now, Alick? you spoke to me of a friend, who wished to see your master, and you usher me in a peddling knave! go, countermand the claret, and order a jug of mild ale—but stop, you may bring in the claret, and the ale too, as I must needs drink a something while my honest friend here, discusses his ale," said the Captain.

"You need not to trouble yourself, Pearson," said Giles Tudball, "the host of the Blue Boar knows me and my ways: he will be here straightway with a little spiced wine and a pipe of Virginia. Assist me to unbuckle this pack of mine, and deposit it in some safe place: now, take this heavy coat, which is somewhat too oppressive in this warm atmosphere, and furnish me with a pair of your master's shoes, in the place of these boots, for I am wearied with a long day's ride."

Pearson readily obeyed, and, when he had stripped Giles of his outer garments, civilly asked him if there was aught else he could do for his comfort.

"You may take this accursed wig," said Giles, "but pray put it up carefully, lest the Roundheads suspect me in my natural locks, which have hitherto escaped the scissors of the barber. There, I am comfortable now, leave me, and give mine host a hint that his presence with the creature comforts is desirable."

Pearson left the room, and Captain Hurstmonceau, stared at Giles as he shook his shock head of hair over his broad shoulders, and took a seat close to the bedside of Hugh de Mohun.

"You take it coolly, my man; by which name I must call you for want of knowing your real appellation," said the Captain; "but I will trouble you not to approach so near to the couch of my friend, lest you should break his slumbers: on the uninterrupted continuation of them, I give you to know, depends his ultimate recovery."

"Poor boy!" said Giles, feeling Hugh's hand; "he is feverish still—I would that Aaron Grave-

boys were in the neighbourhood, he would speedily set thee right."

"The Colonel has already taken the medicine of him to whom you allude, if I understand Perkin Doyle rightly, and much of his recovery may be attributed to its administration," said the Captain.

"I am right glad to hear it. I will, if you will permit me, drink to his perfect restoration in this cold liquid of yours, seeing that our host is somewhat dilatory in executing my orders about the spiced wine," said Giles, and as he said so he lifted the tankard, and found it empty.

"By your garb, now that you are disencumbered of your *surtout*, and your riding boots—to leave your pack of wares out of the question, I judge you to be some good king's-man in disguise. Nevertheless I give you to know that you are in company with a gentleman, and one who bears a commission in his majesty's service," said Hurstmonceau, rather surlily.

"Which means that you would know who I am," said Giles.

The Captain nodded.

"Well, then ;" said Giles Tudball, "I am a sort

of half seaman, and half landsman. The youth who lies there, wounded by one whom he once loved, gained my affections by his fondness for the sea and for the sports in which all true Englishmen delight. Many a time hath he sailed with me, in the Channel, and many a wild night have we passed together on land. I warrant me, if you have known him long, that you have heard Hugh de Mohun mention the name of Giles Tudball, the tanner of Minyead."

"And you are Giles Tudball? give me your hand," said Hurstmonceaux. "I grieve that I should have been rude to one of whom my wounded friend hath told me as having done many kindnesses to him."

"Enough—enough, say no more. I bear letters and papers of importance to him, and I would that he were awake to receive them, for tomorrow's dawn must see me on my road to Dunster again, where, as I hear, an outbreak is speedily expected," said Giles.

"We must not disturb Hugh de Mohun," said the Captain, "for much depends on his enjoyment of a sound sleep, but we will pass away the time

over a little liquor and a pipe or two, until Nature shall have shewn that she hath done her duty as a physician, by causing him to wake of his own accord."

"Agreed," said Giles, "and here come our worthy host and Alick Pearson, with materials for our refecton."

CHAPTER XI.

HUGH's slumbers and his friend's colloquy lasted so long, that the captain, overcome with wine and some score of pipes of pure Virginia, pleaded weariness from over-much watching, and staggered off to seek his bed. Giles Tudball, upon whom the wine and tobacco had taken but little effect, announced his intention of taking a nap in his chair, that he might be ready to communicate his news to Hugh so soon as Pearson, whose turn it was to watch him through the night, should inform him of his being awake. Graveboys' opiate, however, was of so powerful a nature, that morning had dawned before its effects ceased to be felt.

"He will sleep for ever, as it seems," said Giles.
"The sun is already shining, and it behoves me to

be on my way westward. Think you, it will harm your master if we rouse him? I would leave the packet which I bear, in your charge, to be delivered to him, when he wakes; but that I think he would like to see me, and hear the important news I have to communicate to him, and which I have learned since I quitted Dunster."

"I will rouse him at all risks," said Pearson, "for I believe that the letters you bring him from Somersetshire will do more to repair his health than all the drugs that the most skilful surgeon can administer."

"Let me try a method of rousing him, to which he was used on board the Blossom of Minehead," said Giles, as he laid his hand on Hugh's shoulder, and gave a shrill whistle, in his ear.

"What cheer, what cheer?—Am I still dreaming that I am in the Channel, or do I really hear Giles Tudball's call?" said Hugh, as he raised himself in his bed.

"Here stands Giles himself, Master Hugh, and right glad is he to greet you. I heard not of your wound until I visited Master Pym's house in London. There I heard from Janet Hodge, that

Master Julian had slain you, and been dismissed from Derby house by Pym and his daughter, for having displayed a most unseemly joy at your death."

"I cannot account for the enmity with which he, who was once my friend, and whom I never willingly offended, pursues me," said Hugh.

"He feels himself aggrieved, that Mistress Everard, though he never addressed her as a lover, until you had rescued her from drowning, should have preferred you to himself," said Giles.

"But I have heard that, if he had ever set his affections on Mistress Everard, he had transferred them to another, and was affianced to the fair daughter of Master John Pym," said Hugh.

"So it was reported and believed in Pym's household, and the sudden departure of Master Bachell has caused so much grief to Pym and his daughter, that both of them are seriously ill," said Giles.

"How heard you that my wound had not proved fatal?" enquired Hugh.

"From one of the Prince Rupert's dragoons, whom I met nigh to Brentford, and who assured

me that he had heard the surgeon's report of the dagger's blade having glanced along your ribs, instead of penetrating the lungs," said Giles.

"I suffered much, from loss of blood, and, had it not been for the kindness of Captain Hurstmonceau and the zeal of Alick Pearson, who between them bore me from the field and stanchd my wound, I must have died. But you bear me some news? letters I trust from—from my friends," said Hugh.

Giles Tudball dived into the pocket concealed beneath his arm, and produced a small parcel. Hugh opened it eagerly, and found the letters which Graveboys had discovered among Master Snelling's papers, and which, by the advice, of Hurstmonceau, he had written for, enclosed in one from Master Luttrell, who, after stating that all were well in the West, referred him for particulars of their state to the bearer.

"And have you no other letter?" said Hugh, looking woefully disappointed.

"Those be all with which Master Luttrell intrusted me; but here is another, which was placed in my hands by Basil Chipera, who had ridden

over to Luxborough, to apprise Mistress Luttrell of my intended journey eastward," said Giles. "I thought it possible she might want some wares or gauds, and made bold to let her know that I should carry my peddling box to Oxford on my return home."

"I thank you, Giles, you did well and kindly," said Hugh as he opened and read a letter from Mistress Luttrell, in which she congratulated him on the success his gallantry had met with, and assured him of her unabated regard for him. Hugh was much gratified with this kind letter, but how highly delighted was he to see at the foot of it a postscriptum in a hand he well knew. It merely contained these few words—"Go on, dear Hugh, in the course you have so honourably commenced, and fear not. All will end well." They were followed by the initials P. E.

"Giles, again I thank you," said Hugh, as he kissed the letter. "You have done more towards my recovery than even Graveboys with all his skill could have done. A few more days will, I trust, see me in arms again."

"I have news of importance to tell you, which

I learnt in London, from one on whose words I can depend. Laud's death hath been resolved upon: he is to be beheaded upon the Tower-hill. The queen, too, is expected in Oxford in a few days and is, with her maids of honour, and her retinue of priests, to occupy the lodgings of Dr. Brent, in Merton College, the chapel of which is to be given up for her use. I have heard too from Master Robert Quirke, who was in London on a mission of importance for Colonel Wyndham, that nightly meetings have been held in the neighbourhood of Dunster; and that Ashley-Combe, the place of the Bachells, which has been closed and deserted ever since Julian's father was killed, is again occupied."

"By whom?" asked Alick Pearson, eagerly.

"I know not," said Giles. "Two men have been seen about the house, and the gate-keeper, has been to Porlock to purchase such provisions as he could not require for himself, though he pretended that his infirmities made his appetite somewhat delicate."

"Does Master Luttrell, or Colonel Wyndham, know of the occupation of the Lodge and of the

nightly meetings that have been held?" asked Hugh.

"Both of them," said Giles, "and, as a measure of precaution, Mistress Luttrell, with the other ladies, the children, and servants, have left Luxborough for the securer walls of the Castle, and a strong garrison of trusty men has been sent from Minyead to guard the Colonel's house."

"I fear me that Master Julian hath returned to the home of his fathers, and with no good intent," said Alick Pearson; "that jade, Janet, had she chosen it, might have furnished Master Tudball, with further information, regarding his movements."

"Be not harsh with Janet, Master Pearson; she, with tears in her eyes, made many kind inquiries after you. Her foster-brother, for such you know was Master Julian, has, as it were, left her amongst strangers, and I have but little doubt that she would gladly seek her old friends, if she could depend upon their receiving her in a kindly manner, and forgetting or forgiving what has passed," said Giles. "She bade me, should I see one Alick or Alexander, place in his hands a small purse which

she had knitted or netted, I know not which to call it, for I am not skilled in the craft of women, with her own fair hands."

Alick took the little purse, which Giles drew from his pocket and presented to him, and a tear started in his eye as he hastily placed it in his vest near to his heart.

"I must now leave you, Hugh de Mohun," said Giles.

"Not until you have taken some refreshment," said Hugh, "while you are breaking your fast, I will indite a few words to my friends, who may have heard of my being wounded, to apprise them of my recovery."

Giles Tudball sat down, and partook of the viands that Alick procured for him, while Hugh wrote a letter to Mistress Luttrell, and added a postscript for Prudence Everard, in which he assured her, that the career he had commenced should be persevered in, or end in his death on the battle-field.

"Write not at greater length, Master Hugh," said Giles; "I will say more in five minutes,

when I return to Dunster, than you can put upon paper in half a day. Your side, too, will not be benefited by the exertion."

"I am nearly free from pain," said Hugh, "and be assured of this, that, unless duty calls me to another quarter, I will not be long ere I pay a visit to my friends in the West. Commend me to them all, and say everything to them for me that your kind heart can dictate to you."

"Farewell, then," said Giles, "we shall gladly hail you in the West, but do not travel thither before your surgeons shall have given you their assurance that you may do so with safety to yourself."

Hugh, shook Giles Tudball's hand, and, when he had left the room, after resuming his pedlar's garb and pack, again perused Mistress Luttrell's letter and its postscript.

"I had almost forgotten a most important part of my embassy," said Giles to Alick, as he assisted him to mount a scrubby-looking Exmoor forest pony, on which he was travelling, "give your master this bag, and say, that Master Luttrell bade me leave its contents for his use during his

sickness. He knows that the king's exchequer is but poorly furnished, and that the army does not get paid so regularly as it should do."

Alick took the bag, and, after bidding Giles God speed him, carried it to his master, and informed him of Giles's message.

Hugh opened the canvass, and found a sum of money in gold, within its folds.

"It is well, and kindly done, Giles," he said as he counted over some twenty gold pieces, "but I am not so easily deceived as you may fancy. Master Luttrell hath expended his resources on loyal purposes, and would not deem it necessary to send a supply of money to me who am, as he must think, sufficiently well provided. But I will accept of this sum, which comes most conveniently, as a loan to be repaid when fortune shall have placed it in my power to reimburse it."

He had scarcely time to place the bag under his pillow, ere Hurstmonçeau followed Alick Pearson into the room.

"To breakfast, Master Hugh, to breakfast, I am somewhat dizzy in the head, and need my morning's draught, for your friend Tudball, who is

I doubt not snug asleep, caused me to exceed in my potations."

"Giles Tudball is already set out on his route westward, and needed nothing beyond a simple breakfast of meat and mild ale, to enable him to undertake a long journey," said Hugh.

"It is impossible! he was intoxicated—beastly drunk with wine. I put him to bed; seeing that he was not capable of even undressing himself," said the Captain.

"You dreamed it, Hurstmonçeau—which will serve your purpose just as well as if you had performed the friendly offices you would have done for him. He sat up with me, and, having given me certain letters and messages, is, as I said before, set out on his return to Dunster."

"It is impossible; I say it again. He was—"

"In a fit state," said Hugh "to put into my hands a packet of letters, which Captain Hurstmonçeau expressed a wish to see. They are here, and were delivered to me most soberly by Giles ere he left me."

Hurstmonçeau, took the papers which Hugh showed him. He examined them carefully, and

returned them to him, saying that "he could make nothing of them, although, he felt satisfied, that the hand-writing had, at one time, been familiar to him—"but," said he "to tell you the truth, my master's correspondence with the fair sex was of so extensive a nature, and their dear little figures were so much alike, that it would puzzle a far more attentive secretary than I ever was, to say from which of them these letters emanated. But preserve them, carefully, Master Hugh: we shall make something of them yet."

"I fear not," said Hugh, "nor do I mean to trouble myself further about my origin. I have commenced a career, which if it terminate as favourably as it hath begun, will enable me to fulfil my intention of making a name for myself."

"A name may easily be obtained," said the captain; "but there are some pretty little estates attached to some of our olden names, and to say the truth, in these times, when coin runs scarce, I would rather be able to prove myself one of an old stock, who had gold in store, or some dirty acres to dispose of and convert into specimens of the precious metals, than go about a-warring with

the chance of gaining more wounds than gold pieces. Our host, yester-e'en—curses light upon him for it!—presented his reckoning, and hinted at a wish to be paid: and there are the surgeons, and—in short, Master Hugh—I will not disguise it from you, I have nothing left in the shape of a coin of the realm.”

“Help yourself then, freely, my good friend; pay our landlord his due, and discharge my surgeons, after paying them liberally, for I fear not that I shall need their further services,” said Hugh, as he tossed the bag, which Giles had left for him, into the captain's lap.

“I will not question you as to how you came by this supply, but will—and that instantly—settle with our host, who intimated to me a disinclination to furnish further supplies of his medoc unless he were paid for sundry pottles of it, already consumed,” said the captain.

“Nay, be not in such haste. I have news to tell you,” said Hugh.

“I will hear them on my return. I must assure our host of our solvency, and get a supply of spiced wine to give me an appetite—which I

grieve to say it, he, in his malignancy—for he is a malignant as our enemies, the puritans, term us—refused to furnish without receiving payment for favours already conferred: such were the impertinent words of this vintner! I will go pay him, and kick him if he be not civil," said the captain.

It is to be presumed that the host of the Blue Boar, was civil on being paid his arrears, for Hurstmonçeau returned speedily, followed by the worthy himself, who bore a tray, furnished with the spiced wines which seemed so necessary to the captain, as a precursor to an appetite.

"And now for your news!" said the captain after a copious draught.

Hugh repeated to him the information he had received from Giles Tudball, and expressed a wish that he were well enough to travel to Dunster, and watch Julian Bachell's proceedings, which he feared boded ill to that part of the country, which had been hitherto peaceable and loyal to the King.

"Pish, man! never fear about the doings of a mere boy. Trust me that Colonel Wyndham, is both able and willing to defeat any plans that his rashness may lead him to form. Dunster

Castle, if I am rightly informed, is one of the strongest holds in the West, and well furnished with stores and provisions. Lord Essex and the other Parliamentary leaders are too well watched, and too much harassed by the princes, to lend their support to a youth, who cannot summon above a hundred men to follow him to the field. A few days, I hope, will see you capable of taking to horse again, and then, if your desire to travel westward remain as strong as it is now, I will obtain you permission to do so, which, I think may be the more easily effected, if the rumour be true, that Prince Rupert is about to besiege the disloyal city of Bristol."

"There be joyful tidings arrived, Hugh," said Anthony Wood, suddenly entering the room. "The Queen comes to Oxford shortly, and honours our college of Merton with her presence. I have just been to see them putting St. John's church, which some call Merton chapel, into a fit state for the performance of the rites of the Romish church. The piscina and sedilia are prepared, the altar properly decked with tapers, and flowers, and the reredos—"

"You are late with your news, Master Longshanks," said the Captain, "so, unless you can furnish us with news of which we are as yet ignorant, you had better leave Mohun to sleep again, if he be so disposed, and hurry back to see the progress of the preparations in which you seem to take so much delight."

Anthony, having heard from Hugh's lips that he was much better, took the captain's hint, and ran back to college, where he exerted himself as much as any of the hired workmen to forward matters for the Queen's coming.

CHAPTER XII.

IN a few days Hugh de Mohun was able to leave his room and take the air abroad. He was anxious to resume his duties, but Prince Rupert would not hear of it. He, therefore, spent the principal part of his time with Anthony Wood; for the captain, tired of restraint, had returned to head-quarters, in Abingdon, where he amused his leisure hours in carousing with some of his brother officers, in the hostelry, known by the sign of the Crown and Thistle. If drinking to the success of the King, and the downfall of his enemies had sufficed to effect those objects, the civil-war would have been speedily brought to a close; for even the little knot that met daily and nightly in this one hostel displayed so much zeal in the

cause, that the cellars, well as they been furnished, now required replenishing.

The landlord, however, was relieved of his liberal but troublesome customers, for a time at least, by an event which made Oxford the centre of attraction.

The Queen had escaped the many dangers that had beset her in the north, and her arrival, with the King, who had gone out to meet her, was hourly expected. As Lord Essex's forces were still far distant, being invalided in the neighbourhood of St. Albans, and no immediate fears were entertained from the parliamentarians, all the horse, who had been quartered in Abingdon, were called to Oxford, and ordered to go out on the northern road, to escort the royal pair into the city.

As Hugh was sufficiently recovered to mount his horse, he joined the Prince, and marched out to meet the cavalcade which entered Oxford, amidst the ringing of the joy-bells, the discharge of cannon, and the shouts of a vast multitude that had assembled from all quarters.

The Queen rode beside her royal consort in a carriage, and seemed much pleased by the recep-

tion that she met with. Several other carriages containing her ladies, and the ecclesiastics who always attended upon her, followed next, and behind them came the troops whose duty it had been to secure her a safe passage to Oxford from the north.

When Hugh had seen her Majesty to the north gate, his services were dispensed with; and, giving his horse to Alick Pearson, he sought his room meaning to retire early to his bed, for he felt fatigued with being in the saddle for so many hours, for the first time since his illness. He was not agreeably surprised to find his chamber occupied by Hurstmonceau and some of his companions, who apologised for intruding upon him, under the plea that the city was so full that they could not procure any other accommodation.

"Sit down with us, Master Hugh. We have ordered in some of our host's medoc: a few goblets of that bright red wine, will infuse some of its colour into your cheeks which, to say the truth, lack it not a little," said the captain.

"My room is at the service of yourself and of your friends, said Hugh;" "but you will pardon

me if I leave you and them to its free enjoyment : I am not a good boon companion at the best of times, and now I feel that the fumes of the wine and the Virginia would overpower me. I will share the apartments of Anthony Wood with him for one night ; for, though the other Merton students have been compelled to vacate their rooms, he has contrived, by some means, to maintain his ground. I wish you a pleasant evening gentlemen."

Hurstmonceaux looked more than half offended, and Hugh heard him mutter something about "chicken-heartedness," as he closed the door behind him.

Great, and marvellously great, were the exertions of the cavaliers in drinking to the Queen's health, on that memorable night. It is said, indeed, that most of the vintners' stores failed them before their guests were satisfied, and that ere midnight came the price of a bottle of wine had been quadrupled.

We will not dwell upon those scenes of revelry, however, but follow Hugh de Mohun to Merton, into which he would have found it difficult to

gain an entrance, through the troops that guarded the gateway, with strict orders to let no one pass but such as could produce an order from the King himself, had he not, as we have seen, known of a method of gaining an entrance by a secret way, and availed himself of it successfully, much to Anthony Wood's delight, who, after having been repulsed by the royal servants and the soldiers who were on guard, had no one to whom he could talk of the happy events of the day.

Perkin Doyle, though with difficulty, procured them some supper, and made up a temporary bed for Hugh in Anthony's outer room. As the night was intensely hot, they did not retire until after the Queen had returned from Christ Church, from which, as the King had his apartments there, a private passage had been contrived to Merton, through the groves. They heard the guard relieved, and, when all was quiet in the quadrangle, threw open their windows, which looked into it, and sat there, enjoying the fresh air that was thus admitted.

Hugh listened to Anthony's ceaseless remarks on all that he had seen that day, until the bell of Christ Church announced the hour of eleven.

"I must to bed now, my good friend," said Hugh. "You forget that I have been in the saddle for some hours to day, and for the first time since my recovery."

"Nay, go not yet. I am too much excited to sleep; let us take a walk in the quadrangle for a short time, just to cool us," said Wood.

"Well; for five minutes I will consent; for by the moon's rays I can see that your usually pale face emulates in its redness the light from yon window, which cannot be far from the apartment of the Queen."

"By heaven!" said Wood, as they came out into the open air, "I cannot make out the meaning of that light. The Queen sleeps in the room above; for I managed to get a peep at the arrangements made for her reception; and the room—Dr. Brent's study—from which that light gleams, is appropriated to some of her ladies. They have affixed temporary shutters to it, to keep off the eyes of the inquisitive, or we would soon know the meaning of that light at this unusual hour."

"The room is on fire!" said Hugh, "see through

yon crevice, the flames lick the ceiling: follow and aid me."

Without attempting to gain an entrance by the door of the warden's lodgings for he felt that no time was to be lost—Hugh leaped upon the window-ledge, and, with one thrust of his foot, forced the leaden casement, and the boards that had been placed against it as a shutter, into the midst of the room, and sprung in after them. He saw that the rushes, with which the floor had been strewn, were in a blaze, and that the females who occupied the two beds were in a state of stupor, arising, as he conjectured, from the smoke with which the apartment had been for some time filled. To snatch the one nearest to him from her bed, and bear her to the open window, was his first act: his second was to bid Anthony Wood throw the bed-clothing over the burning rushes, by which they were speedily extinguished; and as no part of the room, which, fortunately, was built of solid masonry, had caught fire, he ordered the door to be opened, and a free current of air to be admitted.

"We are in a pretty predicament," began An-

thony; "two women, either dead or dying, and none of their sex to help us."

"Silence, for your life—alarm not the Queen. Go to your rooms through yon open window, and bring a light hither," said Hugh.

"We had rather too much light just now," said Anthony.

"Jest not now, boy, but be speedy; the application of a little fresh water, added to this cool air, will, I doubt not, restore these ladies to life again; but we must have the means of finding the water," said Hugh.

Anthony, in great haste, jumped out of the casement, and found himself in the gripe of a man, who demanded of him "who he was, and what he did there?"

"Hurstmonçeau, it is you—I know you by your voice: if you are sober—" said Hugh.

"As sober as any loyal subject ought to be on such a day as this. I do but take a five minutes' nap in the porter's lodge of this loyal college, and when I wake I find my moral friend in the chamber of the maids of honour," said the captain, in a tone which indicated that his nap had

been too short to enable him to rid himself entirely of the effects of the wine that he had taken.

“Rouse thee, do rouse thee, Hurstmonçeau ; the room was on fire, and had I not forced an entrance, two ladies, here, would have been smothered ; let Wood go for a light, and do you assist us to recover them without alarming the Queen.

The captain was, as it were, sober in a moment. He assisted Wood to procure a light, and returned with it to the room in which the fire had broken out. He found that Hugh had placed both the sufferers near to the open window, and thrown blankets over them, so as to leave their faces only exposed, while their persons were sufficiently sheltered to prevent any ill effects from the night air.

“Water, water,” said Hugh, “sprinkle it freely—be not afraid. See, my patient is coming to already.”

“Mine, also, who, fortunately, is the younger of the two, shews signs of life ; for she is sighing, as Will Shakespere has it, like a furnace,” said the captain.

"Cease your fooling! if you can," said Hugh, as the lady whom he had been supporting lifted her head from his shoulder and enquired where she was, and what had befallen her.

"You have been in danger from fire, madam, but now are safe. Make no noise, lest you alarm the Queen. I am Hugh de Mohun, a colonel of one of Prince Rupert's regiments, and your friend is under the care of Captain Hurstmonceau, a captain of foot, but serving as a volunteer with the Prince. If you are sufficiently collected, we will leave you," said Hugh.

"De Mohun!—Hurstmonceau!—am I dreaming?" said the lady, as she pushed Hugh aside; "Leave, leave me—if what you have told me is true—I—I, never thought to hear those names again. Hurstmonceau!"

"Here, madam," said the captain, "and happy I am to say, that your companion is speedily recovering."

"Leave us, I entreat you, gentlemen," said the older lady, "we are grateful for your services; but we would be left alone—this situation is a most painful one."

"Come away," said the captain; "that little laugh, mingled with a sob or two, indicates what the women call a tendency to hysterics—a state not to be wondered at, when we consider, that maids of honour are not used to be seen in their nightcaps, by such as we. Tumble out, Master Longshanks, and leave the window free for our sortie."

Before their escape was effected, however, a maid-in-waiting, had been sent by the Queen herself, to know the meaning of the noises, by which her rest had been disturbed. A brief explanation was given; and an assurance that the fire was extinguished, and no harm had befallen the ladies, save the fright to which they had naturally been subjected.

"Well;" said the captain, when he had left Hugh de Mohun and Wood, at the door of Anthony's rooms, into which Hugh refused to admit him—"well; this is either a lucky or an unlucky advantage, for my friend the colonel; according as it may turn out. Either he will get the Queen's thanks, for having saved the lives of two of her ladies; or he will get frowned upon, for having

been caught in their chambers: but let it go how it may—I will be d—d if I know not that elderly gentlewoman's voice of old. I would drink to her recovery from fright, but that it must be done in spring-water, and I detest tadpoles."

So saying, the worthy captain returned to the lodge, and stretched himself upon a table, which served him as a couch, and slept away the remainder of the night, as soundly as if he had not been charged with the inner guard of the gate of the college in which England's Queen was sleeping.

So quietly had the fire been extinguished, that, excepting the Queen, who had been informed of the event by her attendant, no one knew that it had occurred, but those who had assisted to extinguish it. The guard, the command of which had been entrusted to Hurstmonceaux, had not been admitted within the walls of the college, but were stationed in the street before it, where, as no danger was apprehended to the Queen's person, in so loyal a place as Oxford had proved itself to be, and as their captain was far from sober, the men passed the night in such amusements as suited their fancies, fearless of any check from their commander.

Some smoked and drank, as they talked over their exploits and adventures, others trolled the royster-ing songs of the time; but the majority danced with maidens of the city and the adjoining villages, whose ignorance, or want of modesty, prevented them from perceiving the impropriety of such conduct.

"There is fun abroad, Hugh," said Wood, as he sat at his open casement, after the captain had left them. "Hark, to the shouting, the singing, and the music! let us out and join them."

"No, no, Master Anthony!" replied Hugh, "you add not to the dangers that beset you, with my consent."

"Dangers—what mean you?" asked Wood.

"Merely that Dr. Brent may chance to be angry that you have housed one in your rooms who got into College in an unlawful manner, and against all orders," said Hugh.

"A *that* for the warden!" said Anthony snapping his fingers, "let him look to himself; if report speak the truth for once, he is likely to be removed from his wardenship to give place to a more loyal man."

"How mean you? Gilbert Dynes, ever bade me be on my guard against him, and even hinted at his holding a correspondence with the king's enemies."

"And so he hath been doing. It is clearly proved that the Lord Essex's design on Oxford was suggested by him, and would have succeeded, aided as it would have been by our friends the Gruellers, had it not been for the check, the Roundhead knaves met with in Chalgrove field, wherein Hampden was slain by you—for he is now dead of his wounds—and you were wellnigh killed by Julian Bachell. Brent's days, as warden of Merton, are numbered, rely upon it."

"Well, Master Anthony, I am too much fatigued to converse further with you to-night. Let us to bed, and in the morning we will talk over these matters at length."

Anthony Wood assisted Hugh in ridding himself of his armour, of which he had not entirely divested himself; and when he had seen him in bed, and, by his breathing, judged that he was soundly sleeping, the boy opened the door of his rooms, and stole quietly through the quadrangle

to the part of the wall which he knew would give him egress without being seen, or even suspected, as he thought. He climbed the wall, sat on the top of it for a while, and, believing the spot below to be clear of spies, dropped down upon two persons, whom he found, to his great dismay, to be the warden, Dr. Brent, and precious Master Parker, of Wadham.

Each of them spoke but a word; yet Wood knew their voices. One of them seized him by the collar of his dress; but the lad lifted his leg, and, with all his force, thrust him from him, and, finding himself free, ran, at the top of his speed, towards St. Alban's Hall, and passing up Logic Lane, gained the High Street, where he found so much amusement in inspecting the various groups that were collected around the houses of entertainment, that he soon forgot his fears of Dr. Brent, and the consequences that would be likely to result from his stealing out of college, if his person should have been known.

CHAPTER XIII.

ALTHOUGH the Queen was fatigued by her long journey, and the exciting events of the previous day; she rose, as was her custom, at a very early hour, and attended divine service in the church of St. John, attached to Merton College. Six ladies and the same number of ecclesiastics accompanied her. A private door, opening from the warden's lodgings, admitted them into the chancel, which had been fitted up expressly for the occasion. Thus the Queen was enabled to perform her devotions, according to the Roman Catholic ritual, without giving offence to those, who, while they hated the puritans, entertained a dread of popery.

When the service was ended, the Queen took her morning meal in her own apartment, with the

ladies of her household. No male servants were admitted within the lodgings; but the viands that were required for the repast were brought from the buttery and kitchen by the college servants, and carried to their royal mistress by the maids-in-waiting. The ecclesiastics were furnished with their breakfasts in the College hall, which had been resigned to them by the warden.

"Marguerite de Brevis, you look but sadly this morning!" said the Queen, laying her hand affectionately on the shoulder of a lady, who sat on her left, and speaking to her in French; for she ever preferred the use of her native tongue to the English language, in which she had even then made no great proficiency.

"Your majesty knows that my looks do not betoken good health at the best, and the fright I met with last night, doubtless, augments my wonted pallor," replied the lady.

"We had well-nigh forgotten the circumstance, for, to own the truth, we were over-weary with our journey, and when we heard that you had sustained no injury beyond a little alarm, we fell into a heavy slumber. But now explain to us the

cause and the particulars of your alarm," said the Queen.

"I must refer your majesty to Ninon D'Arcy, who, having kindly assisted me in undressing, was, I presume, when I fell asleep, busily engaged in arranging her fair tresses, and can, I doubt not, account for the fire, that for a time threatened us with dangerous consequences."

"The young lady thus appealed to, blushed as she replied, that "she could explain nothing that occurred, until she found herself lifted from her couch by the arms of a powerful man, whose breath was strongly tainted with the smell of wine and tobacco;" a speech that was received by a universal smile, and provoked the curiosity of the Queen and her ladies to make further inquiries on the subject.

Marguerite de Brevis could merely state, that she had been alarmed by the noise of some one entering her apartment by the window, and by being carried in the arms of some one to an open casement, where a portion of her bedding had been thrown over her. She believed that she had fainted, and had been recovered from her fainting fit by

a copious application of cold water ; and that, after she had revived, the persons who had extinguished the fire, left the room immediately, and gave her an opportunity of seeking the rest she so much needed.

Ninon D'Arcy confirmed this part of her story, but intimated that the gentlemen, who had so bravely come to their rescue, had not left without explaining to them to whom they were indebted for their preservation.

"We were assured that all the students had been removed from within these walls, save one, a mere boy, called Anthony Wood," said the Queen. "Confide to us, dear Marguerite, the name of your rescuer."

Marguerite de Brevis looked confused, and did not reply.

The Queen looked at Ninon D'Arcy. The young lady understood the meaning of the look ; and replied to it, by saying, that "she heard the younger intruder call himself Hugh de Mohun, and the other gentleman give the name of Hurstmonceaux."

The Queen turned her looks upon Marguerite de Brevis. It was well she did so, for scarcely had

the names of her rescuers passed the fair Ninon's lips, when she found it necessary to catch the fainting lady in her arms, and cause her to be conveyed to her apartment.

"Take great care of her," said the Queen, as she resigned Marguerite to her attendants. "Try the usual remedies, and should they fail, acquaint us with the fact, that we may call in the aid of our physician. Mademoiselle de Brevis hath been too kind and attentive to us in our troubles not to merit our warmest love."

When the ladies had left the room with their patient, the Queen called Ninon D'Arcy aside, and questioned her further on the events of the past night; but Ninon had nothing further to disclose, excepting that she thought the younger stranger the handsomest youth she had ever seen, and that he bore a striking resemblance to Marguerite.

"There is a mystery hangs over de Brevis," said the Queen, "which I have never been able to fathom. That she has endured much suffering is clear. She has scarcely seen some eight and twenty summers, yet her hair is turned gray, her dark eyes have lost their brilliancy, and her cheeks are

deadly pale. When the King comes to visit us, we will beg of him to summon this youth, who rendered you such good service, and thank him for his timely and judicious aid. Now leave us, Ninon, and take your post beside the couch of Marguerite : fail not to report it to us, if any unfavourable symptoms present themselves."

Ninon D'Arcy had not quitted the room many minutes, before the King's approach was announced. He came attended only by the little Duke of York, and for half an hour the cares of state were forgotten. The King was merely the father, the Queen the mother, and the Prince the child.

After a while the King enquired why he had found the Queen alone. She told him of the alarm to which Mademoiselle De Brevis had been subjected on the previous night and her consequent illness. At the mention of her rescue by two officers, the King seemed greatly surprised, and not a little offended, for he had given positive orders that a guard should be stationed without the walls of the College, and no one admitted within them, but the Queen's maids-in-waiting and her ecclesiastics.

"And who were they, we would know, who dared to disobey our orders?" he enquired.

The Queen told him that the one was a young man, named Hugh de Mohun, and the other a captain, in command of the guard, as she believed, who bore the name of Hurstmonçeau.

"The former, we know, to be a young man of merit and of great promise," said the King, "and the latter, though too much addicted to the wine-cup—he was once a follower of the Duke of Buckingham—is a good officer, and zealous in our cause. We will call upon them to explain to us in private, why they disobeyed our orders."

"And thank them for their services," said the Queen.

"If they deserve our thanks, they shall not find us niggard in bestowing them; but we are interrupted," replied the King, as Ninon D'Arcy, not knowing that his majesty was with the Queen, entered the room, to say that Marguerite De Brevis had recovered from the fit, and was anxious to resume her duties in attending on her royal mistress.

"Bid her rest," said the Queen, "until we

summon her to attend us at the hall of this College."

Ninon left the room again, to deliver this kind message ; and the King and Queen, after a further colloquy on family matters, parted, to prepare for the less pleasing duties of state affairs.

About an hour afterwards, Hugh de Mohun and Hurstmonceaux, who had left the College together at an early hour, and seen the guard relieved, were seated in Hugh's room, at the Blue Boar, conversing with Anthony Wood, or, more strictly speaking, listening to the account of his adventures during the past night, and his fears of the consequences that might follow the active part he had taken in the fun and frolic of the scene.

"I shall be rusticated, if not expelled," said Anthony, as he finished his narration ; " especially if the warden recognised me as I dropped down upon him in his hiding-place."

"Tush! tush! Master Longshanks, let Dr. Brent look to himself. He will have enough to do, or I am wrongly informed, to keep his head upon his shoulders. At all events, his reign as warden of Merton is over," said Hurstmonceaux.

"What may be the meaning of your words?" enquired Hugh.

"Simply this: his treachery has been made clear to the King. The Chancellor of the University, the Lord Pembroke, hath deprived him of his wardenship by the royal command, and he would be at this moment a prisoner in the castle of Oxford, with precious Master Parker, of Wadham, had they not contrived to escape at an early hour this morning. They are, doubtless, on their way to join Lord Essex, near St. Albans, to receive his thanks for their treachery in plotting with him to seize upon and destroy the city and garrison of Oxford."

"Huzzah!" shouted Anthony, "I am clear of punishment from him, and care not a fico for anything now."

"His Majesty would see Colonel de Mohun, and Captain Hurstmonceaux instantly. His orders are, moreover, that Colonel de Mohun do take with him the Merton student, who received him into his rooms, against the express commands of the King," said a soldier, without announcing his presence by knocking at the door.

Hugh and Hurstmonceau, bowed to the officer who had delivered the message, and promised to follow him as soon as they had arranged their dress; but poor Wood was too much frightened to be able to rise from his seat. He gazed upon the bearer of the royal mandate, and upon his friends, who were hastening their toilet, in a manner so nervous and agitated, and made so many grimaces that they burst into a hearty laugh.

"It is no laughing matter," said Wood; "but I will tell the truth if I am committed to the Castle for it. I did not invite Master Hugh to my rooms and—"

"Nay but you received me, gave me a supper and lodged me," said Hugh.

"I could not turn you out, had I been so inclined—but never mind, I am of little use in the world, and a few months between stone walls may do me good," groaned out Anthony.

"Courage, sir; certain ladies, if I am rightly informed, are indebted to you and these gentlemen for important services rendered to them in the night. You may rely on the Queen's protection: she loves Mademoiselle de Brevis too much to

allow a favour done to her to remain unrequited," said the officer.

"Then, huzzah again!" said Wood, "though my legs be somewhat long, I generally contrive to fall upon them."

"While you wait for us, would it please you, sir, to take a—seat; said Hurstmonceaux, substituting the last word for a "flagon of wine," when he saw Hugh regarding him sternly. "I would beg of you to take a morning draught; but, that it were an unseemly request, at this early hour,"

The Officer bowed; but smiled as he did so; for he saw a certain unsteadiness in the captain's movements, which indicated, that he had already taken a something to refresh him."

"We are at your service, sir;" said Hugh, "shew us to the King's presence."

The Officer led them to Christ Church College; and passing under an arched gateway, opening into the large quadrangle, gave the word to a soldier, who was stationed at a narrow-door on the left-hand, and was admitted into the dean's lodgings, with those who followed him.

"Wait here, gentlemen, while I announce

you," said the officer, leaving them in the entrance-hall, and turning into the library of the dean, which lay on the right.

"They had not waited many minutes, before Prince Rupert, with Hyde, afterwards Lord Clarendon, came out of the same doorway, by which their conductor had entered. The Prince addressed Hugh, and demanded of him the cause of his being summoned before the King. Hugh explained, as briefly as he could, all that happened on the previous night; and the Prince, bidding Hyde farewell for the present, offered to accompany Hugh and his friends to the King's presence, and befriend them should it be necessary. His offer was gladly accepted; and, when the officer signed to them to approach, he entered with them, and passing up the table, at the head of which the King was seated, took his station behind his chair and whispered a few words in his ear.

"It is not needed, Rupert," said the King, "we have no fears that Colonel Hugh de Mohun, and captain Hurstmonceaux, and that youth there, cannot explain matters to our satisfaction. What we would know is, by what means, and for what reason

they were within the walls of Merton College, contrary to our express orders."

"May it please your Majesty," said Anthony Wood, so nervously, and bowing in so ridiculous a manner, as to cause the King and the Prince to smile, "I was permitted to retain my rooms in Merton, seeing that I was a mere child, and of innocent habits; and notorious, moreover, for modesty of demeanour towards the fair sex."

"And I, may it please your Majesty," said Hurstmonceau, "did but take the duties of the college porter upon me, while that officer went to share with his fellow-servants in the joy and happiness occasioned by the safety and presence of our gracious Queen."

"What says Colonel Hugh de Mohun? How will he explain to us, the cause of his presence within the College walls?" enquired the King.

Hugh bowed, and told the King that he had resigned his lodging to the use of some of the Queen's officers, who were unprovided with other accommodation; and, having been formerly a student in Merton, and knowing that Anthony Wood could and would accommodate him for one night,

he had gained access to his rooms by a private way.

"Contrary, as we have said, to our express commands," said the King, looking sternly.

Hugh dropped his eyes upon the ground, and did not reply.

"We gladly see that you do not resort to falsehood, and plead a want of knowledge of our orders," said the King.

"May it please your gracious Majesty," stammered Wood, in a sad state of alarm for his friend Hugh, "he hath been ill from a wound received in Chalgrove Field, where he slew John Hampden, and he had not a place to shelter him, but my poor apartments; and may it—"

"Enough, boy; we require not to be reminded of the colonel's services. We freely pardon him, and the more readily, as he has, with your help, as it seems, done our Queen a service, in saving two of her ladies from imminent danger."

The King held out his hand, and the three having saluted it, were retiring from the presence; when they were recalled by the King, who said, in consequence, it appeared, of something that Prince

Rupert had whispered to him, "Our Queen holds a levee in the hall of Merton at high noon. You have our permission to present yourselves before her, and receive her thanks for your timely rescue of her ladies."

Anthony Wood was so delighted at the prospect of being admitted to the Queen's court and introduced to her notice, that it was with great difficulty, that Hurstmonçeau and Hugh could put a stop to his bowing to the King, and withdraw him from his presence. His joy seemed to afford so much merriment to Prince Rupert, that he laughed heartily; and it caused a passing gleam of pleasure to shew itself on the features of the King, all unused as they were to joyous smiles.

CHAPTER XIV.

No sooner had the great bell of Christ Church cathedral announced the hour of twelve, than the gates of Merton were thrown open. A crowd of ladies, attended by their male friends, pressed eagerly through a line of the life-guards, who were drawn up on either side, so as to form a lane from the outer gates to the doors of the hall. The Queen was seated on a temporary throne, at the upper end of the room. She was dressed in a robe of state, but on her head, instead of a crown or jewelled ornament of any kind, she wore a wreath, in which the rose, the thistle, and the lily of France were combined. The King and the Duke of York were seated by her side. Behind her stood the Princes Rupert and Maurice,

and the principal officers of state. The ladies of her household were placed on her left, and the priests were stationed immediately behind them.

Hugh de Mohun, Hurstmonceaux, and Anthony Wood took up a position on one side of the hall, which enabled them to see the ladies and gentlemen of Oxfordshire, Berkshire, and the adjoining counties, as they passed before and were presented to their Majesties, who, as they extended their right hands to be kissed by them, made some kind remark to each, complimentary to the loyalty and zeal of their families.

When all the country gentlefolks and their ladies had been presented, and retired from the hall, Hugh and his friends followed in the wake of the deputations from the University and City, who, the one by their Chancellor, and the other by their Mayor, presented addresses to the Queen, congratulating her on her safe arrival among them, and promising to exert themselves to reinstate her and her husband on that throne from which their enemies threatened to exclude them.

The Lord Pembroke was welcomed, but with cold looks; for certain charges had been laid

against him by the University, which, upon investigation, caused him to be deposed from his office. His successor was the Marquis of Hertford, of whose loyalty no one entertained a doubt.

When it came to his turn to be presented to the Queen, Hugh modestly knelt before her. The King, upon whom, as our readers will be kind enough to remember, his features had made an impression, upon his first introduction to him, whispered a few words to the Queen, who regarded him stedfastly before she addressed him.

"Colonel Hugh de Mohun, we have to thank you for services rendered to our friend Marguerite de Brevis, during the past night. We regret that the excitement caused by her danger has been so great as to render it desirable that she should not attend upon us at this our levee. There is a lady here, however, who will assure you that those whom you rescued from impending danger are not ungrateful for your services. Ninon D'Arcy, step forth, and thank the Colonel and his friend, Captain Hurstmonceau for—"

"'Twere better not," said the King, as he ob-

served poor Ninon D'Arcy ready to sink to the earth, "a more fitting season may be found."

"Well then," said the Queen, smiling as she spoke, "We will be guided by you, and release Ninon from this public display of her gratitude; but we will reward her rescuers by inviting them to be present at the play with which Master William Davenant hath offered to entertain us this evening, in the hall of Christ Church."

"You will, I trust, include in your invitation this youth, a student of this house, who seems more than half afraid to claim a share in the rescue of your ladies," said the King.

Anthony Wood shuffled about, and made so nervous an acknowledgment of the King's kindness, and at last fell upon his knees, and seized his Majesty's hand in so clownish a manner, that Henrietta and all about her could not refrain from a hearty laugh at the boy's expense.

Hugh de Mohun and Hurstmonceaux raised him from the ground; and, when the Queen had kindly signified to him that he was to be included in the invitations to the hall, led him away.

As they passed the group of ladies, Ninon

D'Arcy curtsied to them, her cheeks being painfully suffused with blushes. Hurstmonçeau returned her salutation most respectfully, and bade Anthony Wood follow his example. Hugh de Mohun, who had just released the boy from his grasp, bowed to the fair girl, resumed his upright position and was about to move on, when he was surprised to see one of the ecclesiastics, who stood immediately behind her, dressed in his full canonicals, look fixedly at him ; and, placing his right hand within his vest, give him a glimpse of a small cross set with brilliants.

Hugh at once recognised the jewelled ornament as belonging to Aaron Graveboys, and was about to step forward to ascertain if, in the richly-clad ecclesiastical, the mediciner was before him, when he was checked by the person who had exhibited the jewel placing the index finger of his right-hand upon his lips. He hastily followed Hurstmonçeau and Wood, and left the presence-chamber in a state of bewilderment. That the token was the same that the quacksalver of Somersetshire had bidden him remember, he could not doubt ; but to find it in the hands of one of the Queen's



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without the northern gate of the city, as the clock struck the hour of ten."

"I would not be rude, De Mohun," said the Captain, as Hugh returned from his sleeping-room, "but I would fain know if the missive, which Pearson delivered so carefully, comes from the old lady, who was too much agitated to appear in the presence this day, or from the younger one, with whose fair form and features, I confess myself to be captivated."

"She is an angel," said Anthony Wood, who had not yet recovered from his bewilderment: "saw you how she bowed to me?"

Hugh smiled at Wood, and replied to the captain, that the note he had received, was from one of their own sex, who requested him to meet him without the walls, on particular business, after the gates were closed; a piece of information, which the captain received with a very peculiar look, fully implying that he did not believe one word of it. During the dinner, and over his wine, he rallied Hugh on his good fortune, and begged permission to fill a goblet to the health of "the rescued one;" and would have repeated the toast so

often, as to have incapacitated him from presenting himself at the play, to which he had been so graciously invited, had not Hugh positively prohibited the introduction of more wine.

"I am your guest," said the captain, sulkily; "and I cannot do otherwise than submit to your regulations, which, as I am aware, are founded not upon motives of economy, but upon a mistaken notion of my inability to carry a gentlemanly quantum of wine, without disgracing myself."

"Not so;" said Hugh, "when the play is ended, you have my free permission to indulge yourself: but the King, as you know, is averse to that species of loyalty which displays itself in drinking deeply to the success of the royal cause."

"An loyalty and sobriety united be deemed worthy of the royal favour," said Wood, "I shall put in my claim for a share of it."

"And call the mayor's serjeant and Colonel Legge to bear testimony in your favour," said Hurstmonçeau.

"Exceptions—mere exceptions, to prove the general rule," said Anthony.

The captain was about to expatiate largely on

his favourite theme, moderation in the wine-cup, but was prevented by Hugh, who bade him follow him to Christ Church, in order that they might be in time to secure a favourable spot for seeing the court and hearing the play.

“The perspectives of the stage,” as the scenery and proscenium were then called, were placed at the upper end of the hall, and seats were arranged for the royal auditors and their attendants on either side of them. The guests who had been honoured by invitations to be present filled the body of the hall. What was said by Archbishop Laud when, a few years before, he entertained his royal master and mistress at St. John’s College will apply here.

“The College was so well furnished as that they did not borrow any one actor from any College in town. The play was upon a piece of a Persian story. It was well penned and acted; and the strangeness of the Persian habits gave great content, so that all men came forth from it very well satisfied. The Queen liked it so well that she begged for the dresses that she might have her own players to act it over again and



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he gave Wood in charge of Hurstmonçeau, and left the College to exchange his gay apparel for his regimental suit, and to obtain from the governor of the city a pass that would enable him to leave the walls and re-enter them at any moment he wished. When he had effected his purpose he returned to his rooms at the hostelry to take his supper, and while away the hour that was to elapse before he went to meet his mysterious friend in the ruins of Beaumont palace.

He found Hurstmonçeau, who had just returned from seeing his charge safely within the gates of Merton, indulging in copious libations of Medoc, and severely censuring those whose duty it had been to supply the Queen's guests with a refection, for having mingled so much of the pure element with the wine as to make it unpalatable, and fitted only for the stomachs of those who were unused to undiluted drinks.

"I tell thee, Mohun, and I say it in all sincerity, that the continued imbibition of such vile trash as we were furnished with this day would render us disloyal to a man."

"Lay the blame where it ought to be laid," said

Hugh smiling, "upon the manciple and butlers of the College who, no doubt, did not forget themselves and their friends in apportioning out the wine."

"I would that I were Dean of Christ Church but for half an hour: I would expel every soul of them who took a part in so vile a conspiracy," said the captain.

"What thought you of the play?" asked Hugh to divert the mind of his friend.

"Dull stuff, Sir: very dull stuff, and altogether unworthy of the son of a sufficient vintner, as Will's father is reputed to be, who hath kept the Crown Inn in the Corn-market for many years. He must have denied his son access to his best wines, and confined him to such vile potations as I have been compelled to resort to this eve; and, may a curse light upon those who have injured my stomach by such unseemly drinks!"

"Well—well—console yourself with the wine you love so much, until I return; when I will gladly share your last bottle with you," said Hugh.

"Drink, now," said the Captain, pouring out a

huge goblet of claret, "for who knows what an hour may bring forth? you may be—"

"I fear no harm from him, whom—"

"*Her*—be honest for once, and say *her* whom you are going to meet, and drink to her health like a man; being assured, by one experienced in such matters, that the kiss that smacketh of the wine-cup is more acceptable than the lips of one unacquainted with the ruberity of the grape," said the captain; holding forth the goblet to Hugh, who, to indulge his friend, took a slight draught to the health of the "rescued fair ones:" and left the room.

As old Tom of Oxford, or the great bell of Christ Church, commenced tolling out the hour of ten, two men might have been seen turning into a narrow passage, opposite to the church of St. Mary Magdalene, without the northern walls. This passage was, and is still, known by the name of Friars' Entry, and gave access, across Gloucester Green and over the Hythe bridge, to the abbey of Rewley, on the banks of a branch of the Isis.

The stouter of the two men, both of whom were covered with large cloaks, although the night was

oppressively hot. stopped just before he entered the narrow passage, and turned to gaze on the northern gate, known by the name of Bocardo, and famed, as having been the place of imprisonment of the martyred bishops.

"He cometh not; he will not fail me, I trust, for much depends upon him."

"Wine and women have been known to seduce as goodly a youth, as Hugh de Mohun is, from matters of business, ere now," replied his companion.

"You do him wrong, to hint as much," said the other. "We will on to the ruins, and I doubt not that we shall find him arrived there before us."

They crossed the green in front of Gloucester hall, or Worcester college, as it is now called; and turning a little to the right, under a thick and lofty stone wall, reached a small gothic archway: the door opened as they pressed against it, and admitted them to an extensive meadow, in the midst of which were the ruins of what had been the palace of King John. They were now used as a barn and sheds for cattle. The two men looked cautiously round them, and then crossed the

meadow at a rapid pace, and halted below a low circular-arched door, which led into the interior of the building.

"Who goes there?" asked Hugh, stepping forth.

"Friends, who greet thee well, De Mohun."

"Graveboys and Jansen, or I am mistaken," said Hugh, taking the proffered hand of each.

"Know us as such still," said the former, "and now listen to what I have to say, and let not a syllable escape you."

Hugh pressed the hand he held in token of assent.

"Your presence is needed in the West. Julian Bachell hath received supplies of men and ammunition from the parliament, and is about to attack Dunster, where all you hold dear are in danger. The Duke of York travels westward at dawn tomorrow, under the care of Marguerite de Brevis. I have obtained from the Prince Rupert an order for yourself and Hurstmonçeau to escort them with a troop of trusty horsemen. I will join you on the road—probably in my old disguise, and will not fail to give you such information regarding myself as you are justified in requiring. Now

hasten back to your hostel; and let no soul but the captain and Alick Pearson know of your leaving Oxford at dawn, and do not let even them know that you leave it to protect the Duke of York. We would hide his movements from those who seek to obtain possession of his person, in order to hold him as an hostage for his gracious father's submission to their tyranny. Now good night—see that the captain refrains from the wine-cup; and fail not to be without the south gate, before the sun shall have risen."

Hugh pressed Graveboys' hand, and strode hastily back to his inn; where he informed Hurstmonçeau and Pearson, that they must be prepared to set out with him upon a long journey before the dawn.

"So to take the share I promised you I would take, of your last pottle, and to bed," said Hugh.

"Let it be a magnum, then, I entreat of you," said the captain, "for my stomach hath scarcely yet recovered from the vile—"

"Enough, for once, I consent," said Hugh, "seeing, that it may be the last cup that we shall quaff together in Oxford."

CHAPTER XV.

WHEN Hugh de Mohun and Hurstmonçeau, followed by Alick Pearson, had ridden without the south gate, and crossed over what is now called the Folly Bridge, they were met by a single trooper, who presented a billet to Hugh, in which he was ordered to ride forward to the foot of Hincksey hill, and there wait for the parties whom he was to escort. The trooper accompanied them, saying that he was to act as their guide for a time; and, just as the sun rose in all its glories, they reached the edge of Bagley wood, and reined up their horses beneath the shade of an aged oak, that threw its spreading branches over the roadway.

They had not waited long before they saw a

light carriage approach
powerful horses, which
was armed, according to
necessity, of the times.

by two servants in plain
its rear. As the leather
closely around it, the p
within could not be seen

The trooper who had
Hugh preceded the car
the long and tedious asc
ing to the left toward
straight course ; and v
narrow lane down Foxce
by cross-roads, scarcely j
the village of Marchan
thence to Kingston's in
by a score of Prince R
themselves under Hugh
bade them fall in behin
distance as would enable
and be ready to assist him
made upon it.

Their guide, who see

of the ground, turned from the main road that would have led them to Faringdon, and conducted them over a flat country, crossed here and there by deep brooks, passable only at certain fords, and, after a slow and toilsome journey, of some four hours' duration, brought them to a village bearing the name of Stoneford, or Stanford. In the midst of this village stood a religious house, where certain ancient ladies spent the remainder of their days, after the world had ceased to appreciate their charms, or to hold out further charms to them.

It was evident that the arrival of the carriage was expected; for no sooner had it entered the village than the gate of the outer court was thrown open, and the moment it was within it, closed again, excluding those who had escorted it.

"This is what I term most uncivil treatment," said Hurstmonceaux, looking indignant. "Here have we been toiling through a burning sun for hours, and, when a prospect of breaking our fast and slaking our thirst presents itself, lo and behold, we have the gate slammed in our very faces!"

"Right willingly," said the host, giving horses to a man whom he had hailed; "you speedily be furnished with a spitcheeked eel from the Abbey streams, whose belly is as silver bright tankard; and a hare fairly run down the Berkshire hills, by the greyhounds; full of flavour, and as tender as a spring chicken. As for the dining apartments, two mercer-men, who have been for nought but vile two-penny ale since here have been, shall vacate, and give place to better men, who will consult their own healthfulness and their host's interest, by testing the contents of his wine-cellar."

"This way, Master Hugh, I know the way well," said the captain, as he led him into a but well furnished room, behind the bar; and the drawer to bring him a cool tankard, which might serve to amuse them while the supper was being prepared. Its contents were scarcely exhausted and the table spread, when the active waiter entered, bearing the dish of eels, of whose delicacy he had not falsely boasted, and a jugged hare perfumed from which would have caused an engorged alderman's mouth to water freely.

"Of that you must be content to remain in ignorance—for a time at least," replied Hugh. "It is not that your loyalty is doubted, but your discretion."

"And when has my discretion ever been questioned?" asked the captain, angrily.

"Never—before breakfast," said Hugh, smiling.

"I understand your meaning, sir: but the deepest wine-cup that ever was quaffed never affected my brains to such an extent, as to cause my tongue to reveal a secret of importance," said Hurstmonceau, snuffing the air like a chafed and eager war-horse.

"I act not of my own free-will in the matter—I am under orders not to betray the names of those who have been placed under my charge."

"Enough—enough, Hugh; a soldier could make no better reply, nor one more satisfactory to a comrade: let us ride on, for, as my eyes deceive me not, yonder swings in the air, a goodly sign, to intimate, that creature-comforts may be had beneath it."

The jaded horses seemed to entertain the same notion as the captain, for they pricked up their

ears, and pushed on for the spot, without requiring the application of the spur.

"The leathern bottle!—a goodly sign enough if it do but contain good liquor," said Hurstmonceau, as he dismounted and gave his bridle to Pearson.

"If you will follow me, gentlemen," said the guide, "I will shew you to a private apartment, where preparations have been made for your refecation."

Hugh and the captain passed through the house into a small parlour, the window of which opened upon a little flower-garden. On the table were spread the solid materials for an excellent breakfast, flanked by sundry bottles of foreign make and shape.

"I will see that the troopers and their horses are well cared for, gentlemen, and then I must leave you to return to Oxford to report our unobstructed progress thus far. Should you have a letter or message to that city, I will gladly convey it for you. Another guide will supply my place and conduct you further, so soon as two hours shall have passed."

"I thank you, guide," said the captain, "but the conveyance of my baggage having been provided for, I have left nought behind me that I require, unless it might be, a runlet of our late host's Medoc."

"I will write a short note, and—"

"Not before we have refreshed ourselves," said the captain, earnestly.

"And beg of you to deliver it to Master Wood, a student in Merton College," said Hugh.

The guide bowed and left the room. The captain immediately fell upon a fine quarter of lamb, and moistened it with repeated draughts from a jack of what he pronounced sufficiently mild ale. Hugh followed his example, and for some minutes the vigorous attack upon the viands before them produced a cessation of all speech.

At last, Hugh threw down his knife and fork, and filled a goblet of wine, which he drank to the health of "the mysterious travellers." The captain was not long in following his example, and, as he replaced the empty goblet on the board, gave a hearty smack with his lips, and declared that "he had never tasted finer Beaune-wine, even from the cellars of his late master, the duke."

"While you drink to
—I will write a few
Anthony Wood, for I
shall never see him again.

"We will drink to
who deemed it a fair one
Beaune.

"*You* may do so—
morning," said Hugh.

"And yet you call
the captain.

Hugh smiled, as he
bell to procure materials,
answered the signal,
was being written. I
and requested him to
Colonel Legge, as a private
discharged the duties of
had received it, he bowed
that the man who was
already arrived; and then
ford as speedily as he
of those who were interested
travellers.

Hugh returned the bow, and in so courteous a manner, that the captain rose and followed his example. When the door was closed, he said to Hugh, "I see that you suspect, as I have long done, that our late guide is no ordinary trooper."

"I need not any longer disguise it from you," said Hugh, "our friend, for so I may term him, is Colonel Fettyplace, a gentleman possessed of large estates in this immediate neighbourhood, and of proved zeal in the royal cause."

"He was well disguised, then, for I fought under his command, and by his side, at the siege of Reading," said the captain, "and yet I knew him not."

"I recognised him the moment he spoke to me," said Hugh; "few men, whom I have once seen and conversed with, can deceive me by disguising themselves."

As he made this remark, a shadow was cast on the floor of the room; Hugh looked up to see what had caused it—and beheld a short, stout man, dressed as a cattle-drover, standing at the window, which opened into the garden.

"How now, friend? what would you with us, that you approach us thus clandestinely?"

"An it please your honour's greatness, I be the new guide," said the man, removing a felt hat from a shock head of hair, and twirling it in his hand.

"If you squint so fearfully, you will not be able to guide us straight, my good-fellow," said the captain.

"Anan!" said the fellow, grinning and entering the room, "I be a little cross-eyed to be zure, but I were born zo, and zo be uzed to't like. As I be a-dry, I'll drink to your honour's health."

"Well, your modesty, as it appears, will never keep your throat dry," said the captain, laughing, as he poured out a cup of wine and handed it to him.

"Lord love 'ee—never: so here's to the health of the colonel and the captain, wi' two precious hard French names."

"You know us then, my friend," said Hugh.

"Ees—that I does—and I knows something more too," said the fellow, winking; "I knows that a madam wi' another hard French name, is to be guided by I—and the little Duke of York too—ah! ah! ah!"

"I hope your discretion is as extensive as your knowledge," said Hugh, looking seriously.

"My knowledge is preety fair, zur, tho' I can't boast of knowing everybody, when they be disguised," said the man, laughing heartily.

"If this is meant for impertinence—quit the room, sirrah!" said Hugh, as he strode up to him, and was about to lay hands upon him to turn him out—but as he came close to him, he saw a small brilliant cross within the breast of his frock. "Graveboys!" said Hugh, looking bewildered.

"Ay, or Walter Montagu, almoner to Queen Henrietta of England; but at present acting as guide, across the country to its western shores, to James, Duke of York, and his kind guardian, Marguerite de Brevis, and so successfully disguised it seems, that even he who is never deceived did not know him," said the new guide, in his natural voice.

"Walter Montagu, son of the Duke of Manchester, and brother to the Lord Mandeville or Kimbolton, the bitter puritan!" said Hugh.

"True—but a loyal subject, and moreover a priest of the only true church, and, be not alarmed at the information—an humble brother of the order of Jesus."

"And, as I can testify, the companion of my late master, his grace of Buckingham and our sovereign, when they visited the court of France to solicit Marie de Medicis for the hand of her daughter," said Hurstmonçeau.

"How was it then," asked Hugh, "that I found you wandering on foot through Somersetshire, as a common quacksalver, attended by a man bearing a tin trumpet to announce your skill to the gaping peasants?"

"Why am I now dressed as a horse-couper or a cattle-driver?" said Montagu.

"I see it all," said Hugh, "and had I not been as blind as the veriest mole that ever grubbed for worms in the earth, I should have seen through your character long since. And Jansen, who is he?"

"A gentleman of decayed fortune, but of good family, who was my companion in my wilder days, when I excited the wrath of Prynne by writing plays; and for the mere sport of the thing, joined me in playing the mountebank at country fairs and revels. He followed with me to France, our King and his grace of Buckingham, and there, with me,

was induced to become a member of the Catholic church. He is not in holy orders, however, but is a lay member of the society of Jesus."

"Valentine Brooke, who, by his mad pranks among the court dames, incurred the severe displeasure of Marie of France," said Hurstmonceau.

"The same," said Montagu, "but until we have accomplished our purpose of placing our charges beyond the reach of their enemies, you will be pleased to know him merely as my serving-man, and myself as John Brown, an experienced cattle-driver of Wiltshire."

"Pym and the parliament then seek to seize and secure the person of the Duke of York?" asked Hugh.

"The parliament, at the instigation of doctor Brent, had agreed with a party in Oxford, known by the name of the Gruellers, to carry off Prince James, that they might hold him until the king should have complied with their unjust demands. Their plan, however, was discovered, and is, I trust, frustrated," said Montagu.

"And did Pym lend himself to so vile a scheme to induce Charles Stuart to forget his

duty as a King, in his feelings as a father?" asked Hugh.

"I have been informed by one of my agents within this hour," replied Montagu, "that Master John Pym lies at Derby-house, so dangerously ill of a filthy and loathsome disorder, that his death is hourly expected. The public attribute his malady to grief brought on by the illness of his daughter Agatha; but I, to whom it was long ago foretold by one who reads the stars, believe it to be a mark of Heaven's displeasure on rebellion against the Lord's anointed. I warned him of his end in a letter which I placed in the hands of Julian Bachell. That letter was given to him, and I know that, from the hour he received it, his peace of mind deserted him."

"So may all the King's enemies perish!" said Hurstmonçeau, crossing himself.

"Amen," said Montagu, solemnly.

"Nay, utter not such a prayer," said Hugh: "there is something horribly revolting in it. I could slay myriads in fair fight, but to imprecate a pestilence on the half of this nation is most unchristian."

Hurstmonçeau was about to reply, but Montagu, changing his tone, and resuming the voice of a Wiltshire drover, said, "But come, your honours, 'tis time to mount the saddle and zet out. We mun gang a good many miles ere zun goes down. I will order the nags to be got ready, and zee that the zoldier chaps be prepared."

"But our reckoning?" said Hurstmonçeau.

"Pish! man, they as travels wi' John Brown have nought to pay for victuals," said Montagu, adding in a whisper, "remember the journey from Dunster to Oxford with Master Langley,"

He then left the room through the window, and appeared again in a few minutes to say that the carriage was already in advance of them, and the troopers ready mounted.

They followed him to the door, and found Alick Pearson standing there with their horses ready for them to mount, and the dragoons in their saddles.

CHAPTER XVI.

HUGH de Mohun, when he had seen the troopers set out on their march, under the command of Hurstmonceaux, who, now that he knew the importance of those whom they had in charge, was doubly vigilant, rode forward, and, passing the carriage, gained the side of Montagu. Jansen, as we shall still call him, smiled and nodded, as he dropped behind to make room for Hugh to ride by the side of his master. He was admirably disguised, and had not Hugh been let into the secret, he would not have discovered in the red-haired lad, clad in a frock and large calf-skin boots, with a rough broad-brimmed felt hat on his head and a huge whip in his hand, the sleek solemn-visaged follower of an itinerant mediciner. Both master

and man, as they professed to be, rode powerful, muscular horses; but the one on which the master rode was better groomed and accoutred than that on which his serving-man was mounted, and their dresses though nearly alike, were sufficiently different in shape and material to make any one sensible of the relative positions they held to each other.

Montagu pushed across a flat country, at as rapid a pace as the carriage could follow him, and led the way through the village of Childry towards Kingston Lisle; thence, leaving the road which leads to Swindon, he turned short to the left, and came to a small public-house, known by the sign of "The Blowing Stone;" and so called from a huge perforated pebble, which stood at its door; which was found upon the downs, and when blown into by any one accustomed to so rude a wind instrument, gave forth a note like the roaring of a bull, that might be heard for some miles around it.

A relay of horses there awaited them to drag the carriage up the steep ascent, which was accomplished with some difficulty, and no little uneasiness to the occupants of the vehicle. When they

reached the summit, th
their view was one of th

"Let your men halt
breathe their horses, ar
a foot-pace, to yon clu

Hugh ordered the
followed Montagu to th
ed out to him.

"Should your horse
smith at hand to do
smiling.

"I see no smithy, no
us," replied Hugh.

"Yet this was the
whom the country peop
and even aver that the
hammer upon his anvil.
however, in hopes of he
communicate to you
intended for your ears
your horse to browse on
nigh smothered the smit
less the burying-place
chief."

Hugh dismounted and fastened his horse to a thorn-bush which grew beside the flat stone that covered what is called Wayland Smith's cave.

"Look around you, De Mohun," said Montagu ;
"saw you ever a more glorious view ?"

"Never" said Hugh, "have I seen one more extensive, but the absence of running streams and the broad ocean leads me to prefer the Tors of Somerset."

"Extensive as it is, in my zeal for the royal cause, I have travelled so often on foot over the ground you see around you, that I could find my way from town to town in the darkest night that ever obscured the stars : but I will not talk of myself. I have been in Normandy, lately, on a mission of importance. At Rouen, I met with one who is deeply interested in your welfare, and who bade me ask if you had availed yourself of, and profited by, certain books and other things, which he left behind him for your use and edification."

"You must allude to my kind friend and tutor, Gilbert Dynes," said Hugh.

"I do," said Montagu.

"Tell me of his present abode and occupation," said Hugh.

"He is now a member of the church of Rome, and a brother of the society of which I am an unworthy member. He hoped that his pupil, from the perusal of certain works, which he left for him when he quitted Oxford with brother Philippe, might be prepared by this to declare himself a convert to the doctrines of the church of Rome."

Hugh shook his head.

"Enough," said Montagu, "I told him that Master Robert Snelling had done his duty too faithfully by his ward and those who had intrusted him to his care, to allow his mind to be turned aside easily from the faith in which he had brought him up."

"You did him no more than justice in so saying," replied Hugh, "I grieve to think that so worthy a man as Gilbert Dynes should have deserted the standard under which he fought so bravely."

"We will not discuss a theological question now," said Montagu. "Time is short, and I would know if Hugh de Mohun has discovered aught

that may tend to reveal the mystery that impends over his birth."

"Nothing," said Hugh, and he sighed deeply as he said so.

"I should be unwilling to raise hopes that I may not be able to establish:" said Montagu, taking Hugh by the hand and pressing it, "but I have obtained information, that I think may lead to the discovery of further papers, which belonged to Master Snelling, or rather to him who assumed that name."

Hugh gazed so inquiringly into Montagu's face that he replied to his looks.

"I knew not, myself, until I visited Gilbert Dynes in the monastery of St. Ouen, that he whom we called Snelling was his elder brother, but by a different mother: they were separated, it appears for many years, through the caprice of the step-mother, but secretly corresponded with each other, under a pledge that the younger, Gilbert, should not disclose the name assumed by the elder, for a purpose which hereafter may be revealed."

"These be news, indeed;" said Hugh, "and where may we hope to find the papers of which you speak?"

"We must search for the room at Dunster, unless Chipera to come to our thread in my hand, and the clue," said Montagu must press on."

"Answer me but or proceed," said Hugh.

Montagu stood beside about to mount, and be

"I would know why met, and continue still and my fortunes," said

"I might flatter your mien and your manly your bravery in rescuing the waves of the Hone sion upon me;" said Montagu speak the truth—if you the truth—and tell you Porlock-wear, your ex one I had known in my ous to discover who ar add, without meaning t

seek to convert you to our faith—that, since I have known you, your virtues have confirmed the favourable impression which your appearance made upon me. It may be too, that the cruel conduct of Julian Bachel towards you bespoke my further favour.”

“I thank you,” said Hugh, “sincerely thank you. May I ask to whom I bear so remarkable a likeness as to have attracted your notice.”

“It were better not to tell you, at present, at least; lest I should raise false hopes,” said Montagu.

“It is strange,” said Hugh; “but the King and Hurstmonçeau thought that I resembled—”

“Whom?” asked Montagu earnestly.

“Some one whom they had known in earlier days,” said Hugh.

“Well; mount and follow me; for I see the carriage in motion, and they will need me to put them into the right track,” said Montagu, as he rode forth from the cave, and waved to the driver to enter upon a broad, open turf road, divided from the downs on either side by artificial banks.

“This road,” said he, “is called the Ridgeway, and is said to have been formed by the Romans,

and to have extended from the city of Bristol to the town of Lynn in Norfolk; below us to the left lies a field called the Seven Barrows, where those who fell in the great battle of the Saxons, under the command of King Alfred, against the Danes, are supposed to lie buried. Behind us you may see the town of Wantage, in which that wise and good monarch was born—it lies immediately over the square-towered church of Letcombe Regis, which you may discern amidst the elm trees in you valley; ride on, Hugh, for you cannot miss your way. I will to the rear to see that the dragoons do not loiter."

Hugh rode on in deep thought, for the news he had heard from Walter Montagu were of so strange a nature as to give food for much conjecture and reflection. After a few minutes, he turned in the saddle to see if his companion was returning. He saw him riding by the side of Hurst-monçeau, and seemingly in close conversation with him: of the nature of their converse Hugh had no doubt, and hope beamed more brightly in his bosom than it had done since the death of Robert Snelling, whom he now for the first time knew as Robert Dynes.

Thinking of the establishment of his name and family and of presenting himself before Prudence Everard, freed from the mystery which had hitherto enveloped him he rode on until he came to the summit of a steep, and as he deemed it, dangerous descent. Montagu was speedily at his side, and told him that they were passing over the White Horse, an immense figure cut through the green turf into the stratum of chalk below, and meant to represent the galloping steed—the emblem of the Saxon standard.

The carriage descended the hill in safety, but not without causing so much alarm to its occupants that the screams of females were distinctly heard at intervals. Hugh suggested the propriety of their walking down the perilous steep, but Montagu would not hear of it.

It was high noon when, leaving the Ridgeway and turning to the left, they arrived at a solitary mansion, seated in a deep dell, and surrounded with extensive coppices of nut-wood. A broad glade between magnificent oak trees gave them access to it, and, as soon as the carriage had entered its courtyard the gates were closed.

Montagu and his seeming servant had entered

with it, and Hugh de Mohun could only reply by a shrug of his shoulders to Hurstmonceaux's question of where they were to find provender for themselves and their horses.

The question, however, was answered satisfactorily by a man who bade them follow him to a large barn, which stood in a meadow behind the mansion, where they found an excellent repast prepared for themselves, and plenty of corn and water for their horses.

Heated and tired as he was, the captain was so cautious in his libations to Bacchus, that Hugh could not help commenting upon his abstemiousness.

"I have heard that to day that makes me thoughtful, Master Hugh; and I mean not to indulge so freely as, and I confess it, has been my wont, until I have unravelled a mystery that at present bewilders me," said the captain.

"Walter Montagu—or John Brown—as we ought to call him—has communicated either too much or too little," said Hugh.

"I would that I could get speech of that lady who has Prince James in charge," said the captain; "if at least she be the same whom you dragged from her bed in Merton College."

"And what would you with her? What do you know of Mademoiselle De Brevis?" asked Hugh.

"Of a De Brevis—except a worthy gentleman who came from the court of France as an ambassador or royal messenger, or in some such office, I know nothing; but, an I am not greatly deceived by the passage of time, that lady's voice has been heard by me before, though it professed to belong to one who bore a different name. I would that I could even get a peep at her, to see if her features make the same impression upon me as her voice did," said the captain.

"It is impossible," replied Hugh, "she will not allow herself to be seen or spoken to until she has safely discharged the duties entrusted to her."

"Tell me not of impossibilities. The carriage may be upset in descending one of those wild hills we see before us, and I could almost hope that such an accident might happen," said the captain. "But I will not resort to the wine-cup, except for the purpose of refection, until I have solved certain doubts that crowd my brain."

"Heard you ever of one who bore the name of Robert Dynes?" asked Hugh.

"Question me no further at present, De Mohun,

and rest assured that I will leave nothing undone to probe the mystery to the quick. I will now follow the example of our men, and seek a few hours' rest."

So saying, Hurstmonceau threw himself upon the floor of the barn, and was soon in a deep sleep. Hugh could not sleep, but he laid himself down by his friend's side, and remained in deep and anxious thought until the sun was low in the heavens.

Jansen then came to tell him that the carriage had set out. The troopers were roused from their slumbers, and fell into their places in the rear, under the command of Hurstmonceau. Hugh rode forward, and gained the side of Montagu, with whom he conversed on indifferent matters, until, after a pleasant ride in the refreshing coolness of the evening, they came to a mansion near the town of Marlborough, where accommodation was afforded them for passing the night in comfort.

In this manner they journeyed, without anything occurring to alarm them for the safety of their charges, for four days. On the evening of the fifth day, as they were pressing on from Wiveliscombe Barrow towards Luxborough, where

Montagu intended resting for the night at the house of Colonel Wyndham, for their horses were well-nigh worn out with toiling over the hills, Hugh suddenly drew his bridle, and called his companion's attention to the figures of two men, who appeared to be observing their movements from the side of a high and thickly-wooded bank that impended over a part of the road before them.

"Do you remain here," said Hugh, "while I ride forward and question those men. The report of my pistol shall be a signal to you of danger at hand."

Hugh put his horse at the bank, and in a few bounds was by the side of those who had roused his suspicions. They were dressed as countrymen, and held each of them a rough Exmoor-forest pony by the bridle.

"You are out late, my men," said Hugh. "It is already growing dark."

"Not so dark as to hide us from the vigilant eyes of Colonel Hugh de Mohun it seems," said one, laughing.

"Giles Tudball!" said Hugh.

"Ay, and worthy Robert Quirke. We are here

to warn you not to approach Luxborough, and to conduct you by a private path to Dunster, where Master Luttrell, Colonel Wyndham, and it may be, others also, anxiously expect you. I have written orders for your guide, so lead us on to him."

Hugh leapt his horse into the road, and waved to Montagu to come towards him. Giles and Robert Quirke left their hiding-place, and when Montagu reached them, the former gave him a note from Colonel Wyndham.

By the little light that remained, Montagu contrived to learn that it was not safe for him to go to Luxborough, and that he was to trust himself and those whom he had in charge to the guidance of the bearer of the note.

"It is well," said Montagu, "lead on friend." Giles stared when he heard Montagu's voice, and, after a few seconds, placed his hand upon his knee, and whispered, "*You* require no guide in these parts—but I have undertaken the duty, and will discharge it."

"Enough, lead on in silence," said Montagu, pressing the hand that rested on his knee.

CHAPTER XVII.

It was early in the afternoon of the same day, in the evening of which Giles Tudball met Montagu, and prevented his going on to Luxborough, that Master Jenkins, the captain of the *St. David* of Cardiff, stood smoking his pipe, as he leant over the low wall of the pier at Minehead, and conversed, or rather chatted, between the puffs of Virginia, with his mate's wife—Mabel—once the waiting-maid at the *Ship Aground*.

Mabel was playing with a little urchin who could just contrive to toddle along the deck of the vessel, which was moored close to the pier-head, and within a few yards of the hostelry, where, but two short years before, she had incurred the anger of the deceased harbour-master, for neglecting

him and her work to flirt with her lover, now her husband.

"You must bring little Taff ashore, Mabel," said Jenkins, as he turned away to get his pipe replenished, or to take a glass of grog. "As soon as the tide ebbs, the St. David must be hauled out into deep water."

"Are we going across to-night, sir?" asked Mabel.

"*You* are not going across; but it is possible that *I* may have to put to sea; so bring your traps ashore along with the youngster. Master Luttrell has sent to order the cutter to be ready to start for sea at a moment's notice."

Mabel, to whom such sudden movements were now familiar, dived into the fore-cabin with her infant, and soon appeared again, with her little kit of clothes, and stepped ashore, by means of a broad plank that reached from the deck of the St. David to the pier-wall. She was about to follow Master Jenkins into the Ship Aground, when her attention was drawn to the clattering of the feet of two ponies, shuffling along the hard road through the lower town of Minehead towards the quay.

"Who be these, I wonder?" said she, touching the Welshman's arm. "Here come a little man wrapped up in a long black cloak, as if it were mid-winter, and a woman, who is veiled as closely as if she feared that this burning sun would injure her complexion."

"They both look as though they were returning from a funeral," said Jenkins: "but stop; the little man is beckoning to me: let us hear what he wants."

"We have ridden far and fast," said the little man, from between the collar of his cloak, which almost covered his face. "We would leave our ponies here, and be carried to Porlock-weir by water."

"I feel faint and ill," said his companion, "furnish us with a boat, good sailor-man, and you shall be well paid for your time and trouble."

"Hast ridden far, madam?" asked Mabel.

"From Bridgewater only on horseback; but we have travelled for two days and nights, and I am completely worn out," replied the female.

"Dismount and go within. Mistress Luckes will give you access to her sleeping-room, where

you may rest and refresh yourself, while I try to procure you a boat—for mine own cannot be spared," said Jenkins, as he helped her to dismount.

"Delay not, my good friend, and I will reward the man liberally who shall set me ashore at the wear of Porlock," said the little man, as he got off his pony and followed Jenkins, who led the one on which the lady had ridden, into the stables at the rear of the house.

"Within, there are Will Bowering and Alloway, the big butcher, who was thought to be slain at Cutcombe, but is recovered of his wounds; and as tide will serve, and they have nothing else to do, I doubt not that they will row you round, if your offer of reward be liberal enough: follow me within, sir."

The man obeyed; but, as it appeared to Jenkins, very reluctantly. In the parlour sat Giles Tudball, with Master Robert Quirke; both were smoking, and had a cool tankard of cider before them. At another table sat Alloway, the wrestler, still bearing the marks of his wounds, listening to Will Bowering's marvellous tales, and smoking and drinking fast and furiously.

"Put down your pipes, finish your liquors, and earn an honest penny. Here is a gentleman who hath a maiden in tow, who would save a ride over the hills, by being conveyed to Porlock-wear in a boat," said Jenkins.

"I have no boat of my own; but if Master Tudball will lend me a skiff, and Alloway will lend a hand, I have no objection to the trip, provided the gentleman will pay us liberally," said Will.

"I will give a gold Jacobus to be divided between you," said the little gentleman.

"Say a Jacobus each, and as soon as the tide turns, we will start, and in less than two hours land you safe at the wear," said Alloway.

"I will give you the two coins, though it is paying somewhat exorbitantly," replied the gentleman.

Will and Alloway finished the can of spirits before them, and left the house, to get the skiff in readiness, well knowing that Giles Tudball would not refuse the loan of it.

"Would it please you, sir, to lay down your valise, rid yourself of that cumbrous cloak, which

is over-burthensome for a summer's noon, and take a draft of this cold cup," said Giles Tudball.

"I thank thee friend in all sincerity, but I will do neither the one nor the other," replied the man.

"It containeth but small cider," said Quirke, holding the tankard towards him, "and is refreshing, without being intoxicating."

"In all sincerity I thank thee, but I will not drink, save of the pure element."

"Master Robert Browne hath not forgotten the draughts he took, when somewhat travel-weary, in the Luttrell Arms at Dunster," said Giles.

The little man fidgeted in his seat, and turned away his face.

"Tush! man, I knew your voice the moment you opened your lips," said Giles; "but be not afraid—you shall leave this place unharmed, and be landed at the Wear, to visit Master Julian Bachell, as securely as though you were no puritan, but a most loyal subject. Come, off with cloak and hat, for you are well-nigh suffocated with the heat, and fearlessly join us in a cool tankard, which I will pledge you my word shall contain nought but the thinnest cider our host's cellars can furnish."

The preacher hesitated for a moment, but, overcome by the oppressive heat and the fears to which the discovery of his person gave rise, he let fall the heavy cloak in which he was enveloped, and appeared in a new suit of the deepest mourning. He did not refuse the cup which Robert Quirke placed in his hand, but drank of the contents very moderately.

"It will not hurt thee, man, drink again: no! we'll never mind; you will doubtless fare better when you have the free run of the cellars at Ashley-Combe," said Giles. "But what news bear you? bad I fear; if I may judge by your dress you have lost a friend, and Charles Stuart—God bless him!—a bitter enemy. We have heard of Master John Pym's indisposition."

"How long?—how long?" groaned the preacher.

"He is dead, then!" said Quirke, "and you bear the tidings to him who was to have wedded his daughter."

"Too true—too true—my kind friend is dead," said Browne, and he placed his head between his hands and wept bitterly.

Both Giles Tudball and Quirke saw that

Browne's grief was sincere, and respecting his feelings, made an excuse, to leave him to himself by withdrawing and taking Jenkins with them.

"There is one above would speak to you," said Mabel, as we shall still call her, to Giles Tudball, "follow me."

Giles went upstairs, and was ushered into a bedroom, where, to his great surprise, he found a female, closely veiled, awaiting him.

"I was fearful of not being able to speak with you alone, Giles, and I must be quick in what I have to tell you: Master Pym is dead, and I have obtained leave to visit my friends in the West, under the protection of the chaplain, Master Browne, who has been deputed by Mistress Pym to communicate the news of her husband's death, and the continued illness of her daughter Agatha, to Julian Bachell: but of private matters, enough: now listen to me, and ask me not how I learnt the news. The Prince James, Duke of York, travels hitherward, escorted, among others, by Hugh de Mohun, and—and Alick Pearson. A plan has been laid to surprise them this night, near to or at Luxborough. Be it your duty to mar the plan,

and save the prince from danger and Hugh de Mohun from disgrace."

"Janet Hodge, I thank you. I cannot doubt your word, and so soon as I shall have seen you afloat, and on your way to your fatherless home, I will take such steps to save the prince as shall provide for his safety, without involving you or any one else in trouble."

"Now leave me, Giles; but should you see Pearson, tell him that I am true to the good old cause, and to—"

"Him—you would say; it shall be done."

Janet pressed Giles's hand, and he left her to see the skiff made ready: when it was brought alongside the pier, he placed her and the preacher in their seats, and gave strict orders to Will and his companion to land them speedily and safely at the Wear.

"And now, Master Quirke, let us to Dunster Castle with all convenient speed. I will explain to you the motive of my sudden movement as we ride along. We will to my paddock and saddle a couple of foresters, for we may have to ride far and fast, ere the day is ended," said Giles, as he strode

towards the marshes, on the borders of which his tanyard and dwelling-house were situated.

"Where now, I wonder?" said Dame Tudball, in angry tones, as she saw Quirke and her husband saddling the ponies.

"On state business, dame," said Quirke.

"We are for the Castle," said Giles; "danger threatens one whom you once regarded with no unfavourable eyes. Hugh de Mohun travels hitherward, and his life is at stake."

"If you speak the truth—but I fear me that you do but laugh at me, and mean but to smoke and clink the cans at the Luttrell Arms—use no delay, for Hugh was a goodly youth, and hath fought bravely for the King. You may tell him that I have his sea-suit in safe keeping," said the dame, as her husband rode into the meadow, at the back of his paddock, and avoiding the middle town and the village of Alcombe, made straight for Dunster.

The Castle was rigidly guarded, for information had reached Colonel Wyndham, that large bodies of men had arrived from different points, and been quartered about Ashley-Combe. The gate-tower, which had been occupied as a dwelling by Master

Robert Snelling, Hugh de Mohun and Basil Chipera, was now used as a guard-room, and its turrets were furnished with cannon, commanding the steep approach that led to it.

Giles Tudball and Robert Quirke had been employed so frequently by the colonel, that the sentinels had orders to admit them whenever they wished to see him. The gate, therefore, was thrown open to them as soon as they presented themselves before it. Basil Chipera, who had resigned the wardenship, and devoted himself exclusively to the cultivation of his lemons and myrtles, and to playing with the little Alice and William Luttrell; took their ponies and stabled them, and then led them round to the southern side of the Castle, and ushered them into the library by the postern door.

Giles Tudball found the colonel and the owner of the castle reading a letter to the ladies. He was about to withdraw, but Master Luttrell beckoned to him to come forward.

"What news, Giles?" asked Master Luttrell.

"I have a word or two for your private ear, sir," replied Giles

"Speak them out, man; be not afraid," said the colonel.

Giles looked at the ladies, and hesitated.

"Speak out, Giles, I say; and speak boldly."

"Hugh de Mohun travels hitherward and—"

"Tush! man, we know it—sent we not down to Jenkins, to have the St. David in readiness to put to sea?" said Master Luttrell.

"And you konw, perhaps, sir, that his purpose of bringing the prince hither is discovered, and likely to be frustrated. If so, my zeal has outstripped my discretion," said Giles.

"You cannot mean it!" said the colonel.

"An attack is to be made upon them, at or near to Luxborough," said Giles.

"It is impossible that your news can be true," said Prudence Everard, starting up, "if at least the writer of the letter, which colonel Wyndham has just read to us can be depended upon."

"He never deceived me yet," said the colonel, "but let us hear from what source, Giles obtained his information."

Tudball told his tale as briefly as he could.

"Nay, if Master Browne is on his road to Julian

Bachell, rely upon it that Janet hath good grounds for giving you the information which she hath done," said Master Luttell.

"What is to be done?" said the ladies.

"If, as I suspect, the preacher carries secret orders to Master Bachell, to put himself at the head of those who are to attack the party in attendance on the prince and seize his person, we have plenty of time to warn them to avoid Luxborough, and bring them to the Castle by another route," said Giles.

"My information tells me, that they will not halt at Luxborough, if their horses are able to bring them on hither," said the colonel.

"Had you not better send a strong body of men to guard Luxborough?" said Prudence, in a whisper to the colonel.

"And so weaken our garrison, that if it be attacked we shall not be able to defend it?—no, no; that will never do," he replied.

"What then is to be done?" said Prudence, wringing her hands in despair. "The prince will be seized, and his guards slain or taken prisoners."

"Leave it to me," said Giles, "and I will, in company with Master Quirke, go to Luxborough,

in a sufficient disguise to escape notice. I will warn Colonel Wyndham's tenantry—"

"That I can do in person, Giles; for all of them capable of bearing arms are within this town or Castle," said the colonel.

"We will on then, and meet the party before they approach Luxborough. My knowledge of the country will enable me to conduct them by difficult, but private roads; rely upon it, midnight, at the very latest, shall see them all safe within these walls."

"I will give you a note to the leader of the party," said the colonel, "and then use all diligence to reach the spot where you intend to meet them."

Giles and Quirke furnished themselves with disguises, while the note was being penned, and as soon as it was written, they mounted their ponies, and, as we have seen, fulfilled their mission.

We must leave the Castle, for a time, and those whose loyal hearts were beating anxiously for the fate of their friends, and follow Master Browne and Janet Hodge to Ashley-Combe, where events happened that must be recorded in another chapter.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE tide was in their favour, and, in a very short time, Will Bowering and his mate Alloway landed their passengers at the wear of Porlock, and received their gold jacobuses.

"A pretty fair day's work," said Alloway, as he tossed up the coin that had been put into his palm, "let us to the Blue Anchor and get a can of liquor and change for this gold piece."

"Not I," said Will, "I promised Giles Tudball not to go ashore; and, having landed our precious cargo, a puritan parson and a lively waiting-maid—we will back to Minyeard as quickly as we can."

"Let us hail the house at any rate and take something aboard to lighten our pull against tide," said Alloway.

"No—I will be master for once: you shall not taste bit or sup until we are alongside the pier of

Minyead—so push off and pull hard, for I think that our services may be required on shore," said Will.

Alloway reluctantly obeyed, and, as he pulled, asked Will if he knew the names of the passengers whom they had just landed.

"I should be blind an I did not know Master Robert Browne, the preacher, as he is termed; and as to his companion a man must be an ass not to recognise Janet Hodge, the daughter of the old gatekeeper, at the lodge of Ashley-Combe, who hath once set eyes on her fair face; had I been a single man and unsuited with a spouse, Alick Pearson should not have carried off so pretty a wench without having a rival to dispute with him for her affections."

"What can they be doing at the lodge, and why did Master Tudball forward them in their voyage thither?" said Alloway.

"Of his motives for acting as he has done, I cannot speak," said Will; "but rely upon it he has done all for the best. He bade me seem not to know either of them, and to hold no converse with them on their way—but, come, pull away, man, let us to Minyead again as soon as may be—for I love not to be in the Channel in the dark."

"For fear of the grey woman?" asked Alloway.

"You may laugh, as other fools have done, at my dread of old Mother Lecky, but as true as there is a God above us, I heard her voice last night announcing woe to the Luttrells of Dunster," said Will—"so pull, and pull like a man, our services may be needed."

"Tell me your tale, Will, for I know you have something to disclose, and I promise you to put forth all my strength," said Alloway.

"Listen then, as you pull along in the slack of the tide," said Will, "but do not laugh at what I am about to reveal to you—for no other mortal hath ever heard my strange adventure."

Alloway assured his companion that he would not even smile at the recital he was about to hear.

"You must know then, that, only last night, as I lay on board the Blossom of Minyead waiting for the tide to lift her into port, I heard a voice—a voice that I have often heard before—chanting to a melancholy tune, these verses—I shall never forget them, for terror has engraven them deeply on my memory," said Will in a whisper.

"Courage, man! It is broad daylight—speak out boldly, for it is well known that the grey old

b— never travels but by dark or moonlight," said Alloway.

"Whisht!" said Will, "I heard the flapping of wings even then—as you spoke."

"Of course you did; for a flock of seamews left the sands and fluttered over us as if to examine us, and see who we were that had dared to disturb them at their meal: but the verses, man, the verses," said the butcher.

"Thus they ran," said Will, shuddering, "and all the winds of heaven seemed to whistle a most inharmonious accompaniment to them:—

"Leave thy light bark to the buoyant wave,
Her anchor will hold her fast;
Your aid may be needed a friend to save
Ere another day's space be past.
So away to the tower,
Away to the keep,
Ere the Luttrells of Dunster have cause to weep
For the loss of one,
Their sovereign's son,
Who flies from his foes to the ocean deep."

"Well, curses on the old woman!" said Alloway, "if that be all she said—she might have spoken out more plainly if there was any meaning in her speech."

"Nay, curse her not, but pull away merrily; I

shall to Dunster Castle, as soon as we reach our port," said Will.

"And I will with you, if it be but to laugh at your folly in listening to old Mother Lecky, or rather, your own voice in a dream," said Alloway.

A three hours' pull brought them to the quay of Minehead, where we will leave them, to follow Master Browne and Janet to Ashley-Combe.

"Come on, Janet, forward, girl! why stand you loitering about the gate-lodge, and peeping and prying into the coppice behind it, as though you dreaded a ghost," said Master Browne.

"Here dwelt my poor old father, and here passed I most of my happiest days," said the girl; "in yonder thick grove of hazels did I plight my troth to him who has cast me aside as a worthless thing, because I left him to follow one who derived the support of his infancy from the same source that nourished me; but on, sir, I will not give way to these foolish feelings any longer."

"I would expound to thee maiden, the vanity of such frailties, did time allow of it, but we must press on and deliver our tidings to the master of this fair domain. I marvel that the gate-lodge is

left thus unguarded," said Browne, as he threw the gate open with a thrust of his foot.

"Stand, strangers," said a tall trooper, suddenly presenting himself to their view, "the word, ere you pass."

"I know it not. I am from London, and bear dispatches from the parliament to Master Julian Bachell."

"Give them to me, and do you and the wench that bears you company, seek a room in the Blue Anchor below, whither an answer, if one be deemed necessary, shall be conveyed to you," said the trooper.

"I deliver my dispatches into no other hands but those of Master Bachell," said Browne.

"Then you may wait here until he passeth outward, for I shall not permit thee to advance a step further," said the man, planting his pike before the preacher, who rebuked him severely for his insolence, and told him who he was.

"I care not if you be twenty Pym's chaplains, I have orders to admit no one without a pass-word, and on those orders I shall act," replied the man.

"You do right, Reeves; but I will admit these good folks on my own responsibility," said a tall

man, clad in a closely-fitting suit of grey cloth, with breast-plate, back-piece and helmet of polished steel.

"Roger Priver, I bid thee take me to your master," said Robert Browne.

"Master me no masters here, sir; but if you would have speech of my worthy friend, Julian Bachell, follow me, and I will intercede with him in thy behalf: but let me advise thee of one thing—he loveth not to have his ears wearied with long and tedious discourses, such as you were wont to inflict upon the household of your master, John Pym," said Priver, thus, as he thought, repaying Browne for the tedious harangues, which he had been in the habit of dealing out to the household at Derby-house.

"How long? how long?" groaned the preacher.

"And what would'st *thou* here, wench?" asked Priver, turning to Janet. "Thy sweetheart, as the ungodly term it, dwelleth in the tents of unrighteousness."

"I would speak with my foster-brother, your master; so lead on, sir, or dread his displeasure," said Janet.

"Ahumph!" replied Priver, "Master Bachell hath employments—"

"And so hath Master Priver," said Julian, as he stepped forth from the shrubbery into the path, "and it better befits him to attend to them than to insult a preacher of the gospel and a modest maiden. In, sir, and see that preparations be made for the reception of these my friends."

"Ahumph!" said Priver, as he cast a look of deep disgust at Browne and Janet, and stalked towards the house.

Julian spoke a few words of ordinary courtesy to Browne and Janet, and then led the way in silence to the hall door, where two men dressed in the livery of the Bachells, received him.

"Let refreshments be served in my private room," he said, as he passed them.

The men bowed, and one of them went in the direction of the kitchen, while the other, preceding his master, turned down a passage past the large dining-hall, and threw open a door which gave them admittance to the private apartment, once the justice-room of the elder Bachell.

As Janet passed the great dining-hall, she saw that it was filled with armed men, who were taking the meal which answers to the modern tea-drinking, but was then called a bever, and consisted of

merely a manchet of bread and a draught from a jack of mild ale.

When Julian had seated himself, and the door was closed, he asked Browne and Janet, if they brought him any tidings of import.

The preacher begged that Janet might be heard and dismissed, as he had a message to deliver which required that no one but himself should hear it.

Janet took the hint, and, delivering a small packet, which had been entrusted to her by Mistress Pym, watched earnestly to observe what effect the perusal of it would have upon her foster-brother.

Julian read it, and, tossing it from him, bade her seek the housekeeper's room, and obtain what refreshments she needed after her tedious journey.

"Now, may God forgive him, for I cannot," said Janet, as 'she closed the door upon herself, "he hath no more feeling for the poor girl, who is dying for the love of him, than the butcher hath for the lamb that he slayeth for his profit. Had he shown but one spark of tenderness, had he shed but one tear on reading the appeal of Agatha's mother for her dying child, I could have forgiven him—but, though the same breasts nurtured us both—I cast him off, and for ever. I will avail

myself of my knowledge of this house, and hear what treason he and the preacher are hatching."

Janet from her infancy had known every part of the lodge. Instead of seeking the housekeeper's room, which was nigh to the offices of the other servants, she passed round by a dark and somewhat intricate passage to an apartment that joined the room in which Julian Bachell and Browne were seated, and which had been used by his father in the days of his widowhood as a sleeping chamber. She entered it cautiously, and applied her ear to the door of communication between the two rooms. Although the preacher and Julian spoke in a low tone, their words reached her ears, and when they had finished speaking, and the servant who bore the refreshments that had been ordered entered the room, she left her hiding-place, and retreated as silently as she had gained it.

"That plan is already frustrated, if Giles Tudball be but true to his word; and if my courage fail me not, Master Julian's plan shall be equally unsuccessful."

So saying, the girl left the lodge by a postern door, and plunged into the deep woods that overhung the back offices. A few active springs

enabled her to gain the top of the hill, and a quarter of an hour's rapid walking brought her to the door of a keeper's cottage, the occupier of which knew her well, and was distantly related to her. It was not her intention, however, to make herself known to him or to converse with him, for she knew not how he might stand affected among the changes in men's feelings that were daily taking place. She did not, therefore, enter the cottage, but went to the rear of it, and selecting a strong pony out of some three or four that stood there, put a bridle in its mouth, and, springing on its unsaddled back, rode off through the woods towards Dunster as fast as the entangled brush-wood would allow of her going.

Within an hour after her departure, a strong body of men, headed by Roger Priver, were drawn up in the court-yard of Ashley-Combe. They were well mounted and well armed, and many among them were, evidently, men who had seen some service.

A groom held a horse fully accoutred for the field, and a pony was brought out by another servant, just as Julian Bachell, completely armed, and the preacher, made their appearance at the hall

door. Julian sprung lightly into his saddle, and, facing the troopers, addressed a few words to them, in which he explained to them that if they succeeded in seizing a carriage, and bringing its occupants safely and uninjured to the lodge, they would not only receive the thanks of the Parliament, but be liberally recompensed.

"As to those who guard it, you will use your own discretion, gentlemen," said he. "If you are resisted, and we have a warrant for what we do—you may smite your enemies hip and thigh. Should they yield—you will grant them quarter, but not let one of them escape. You understand me? follow. Master Browne, you will fall in, in the rear, with Roger Priver, who will gladly avail himself of your profitable doctrine."

Julian led the way through the coverts which impended over the lodge, and, avoiding the public roads, pushed along as fast as the nature of the country would permit him, towards Luxborough. The troopers followed him in silence, which was only broken by the voices of Roger Priver and Master Browne, who seemed to be engaged in no friendly argument, if they might be judged by their tones and by their animated gestures.

It was nearly nine at night when they reached the edge of the wood that overlooked Colonel Wyndham's house. There Julian halted his men, while he rode forward to reconnoitre. He returned in a few minutes and summoned the preacher to his side. They rode apart from the rest, and Julian told Browne that no lights were to be seen about the house, and that it appeared to be deserted.

"They are not yet arrived," said Browne. "It would be as well to intercept them, before they are ensconced within these strong walls."

"It is well conceived. We will on towards Wiveliscombe Barrow, and conceal ourselves within the woods that overhang the roads that lead hither. Forward, my men," said Julian. "Priver, do you ride in advance, for to you every foot of the ground is familiar, and lead us towards Wiveliscombe Barrow."

"I hope that I am to go alone," said Priver. "I am not willing that my ears should be filled with the ravings of a mad preacher."

Browne was about to make an indignant reply to this insulting observation; but Julian bade him be silent, and reserve his rebukes for a more fitting opportunity.

The point which they aimed at was gained:

The men were cautiously concealed within the coppices, which skirted the road on either side, but, although they waited until the night grew on apace, the object of their watch was not discovered.

"Can they have taken another road?" said Julian.

"Here is one that may answer that question," said Priver, approaching and dragging along a country-fellow by the collar of his coat.

"He tells me that a carriage, the curtains of which were closely drawn round it, was conducted by two men, whom he knew, in spite of their disguise, to be Giles Tudball and Robert Quirke, of Minehead, through the woods below us towards the park of Dunster. It was followed, as he says, by a score of troopers, some two or three gentlemen, and two serving-men."

"Is this true, fellow?" said Julian, levelling a pistol at the man's head.

"As true as that I am standing here," said the man.

"Then, now for my other plan—for Dunster Castle, gentlemen; and knighthood for him who first puts foot within its walls."

CHAPTER XIX.

"I MARVEL greatly," said Basil Chipera, as he sat beside old Jefferies, in the butler's pantry, "I marvel greatly, that our expected guests delay so long. The night is far advanced, and the moon will shortly be down."

"The roads are bad, and the hills steep and dangerous for wheeled vehicles," replied Jefferies, "I trust, however, that they will be speedily here; for our folks above stairs are so anxious for their safety, that they can neither eat nor drink; the supper remains untouched, and no sound is heard among them above a whisper, except it be the heavy sighing of Mistress Prudence Everard."

"Hist—silence!" said Basil, "I hear the sound of a horse's tread: I will out and listen."

"And I will with you," said Jefferies, as he followed Basil into the court-yard.

"Whoever it is, he hath already reached the outer gate, and is doubtless demanding admittance; let us on, Jefferies, and learn what tidings the rider brings?"

They went to the gate just as the officer in charge of it had ordered it to be thrown open.

"It is a woman, as I live, and alone," said Jefferies.

"Hamnet Hele," said the officer on duty, calling at the door of the guard-room, "here is a girl that hath ridden hither from Ashley-Combe, and would have instant speech with the colonel."

"Her name?" said the old soldier, stepping out into the court-yard.

"My name cannot concern you—you are not afraid that one, and she a woman, is come to take the Castle," said the girl.

"Nevertheless, I must know your name before I report your wish to the colonel," said Hamnet.

"I am called Janet Hodge, and my father was—"

"Gate-keeper of Ashley-Combe. I knew him well for a good man and true, and grieved was I that his only child should have broken the heart of an honest lad, called Pearson, by taking service in the family of a rebel," said Jefferies.

"Talk not of these matters now," said Janet, as she sprung from her pony, "but, if you have any regard for the welfare of this family, lead me at once to Master Luttrell or Colonel Wyndham."

"I will do so upon my own responsibility—that is with Hamnet Hele's permission—" said Basil Chipera.

"Do so," said Hamnet; "there is an earnestness in her manner, that leads me to believe she is sincere, and it was ever a practice with that great man, Gustavus Adolphus, to—"

But before he could complete his story, for he had tired the ears of every one by constantly alluding to the Swedish hero, the servants and Janet were on their way to the library; where all the inmates of the Castle were assembled, anxiously waiting the arrival of the carriage.

"I hear the sound of voices and of footsteps on the southern terrace," said Prudence Everard, rising from her seat.

"It is but your fancy, dearest," said Mistress Luttrell, "or the sentinels exchanging a few words as they near each other."

"No," said Prudence, "it is not the measured

tread of soldiers that I hear—hark ! they approach the postern door which leads to this room. I hear a key turn in the lock : something has happened to—to—do, dear Sir John, do go see what has occurred.”

The colonel, who had been in deep converse with Master Luttrell, rose ; but before he could gain the library door it was opened from without, and Janet was ushered in by old Jefferies and Basil Chipera ; the latter of whom announced her by name, and told the colonel, that she had a secret of importance to communicate to him, and that he had, therefore, ventured to bring her into his presence without applying for an order.

“ You did right, Basil. And now my good girl tell us freely what you have to say. To you it is, if I mistake not, that we are indebted for the valuable information brought to us by Giles Tudball ;” said the colonel : “ Against the danger to the Prince we have already guarded.”

“ Alarm the garrison, sir, and get every man under arms—for I heard Master Julian say, that if they failed to secure the Prince’s person on the road or at Luxborough, he would make a night-attack on this Castle,” said Janet.

"He will find that these old walls will stand a long siege," said the colonel, smiling.

"But he means not to attack it openly;" said Janet, earnestly, "he spoke of some secret passage known only to himself and one other, by which he could introduce a body of men into the very keep."

"Know you of such a passage, sir?" said Prudence, addressing Master Luttrell.

"I have heard it said, that in the olden times there was an underground communication between the Castle and the priory of Dunster; but I gave no credence to the report."

"Pardon me, sir," said Basil Chipera, "but in my former office of parish clerk, I discovered an arched door-way in the vaults of the chancel, where the Mohuns and the Luttrells lie buried; I did not explore it, for the dampness of the air and a certain feeling of dread induced me to desist."

"And I, may it please you, sir," said Jefferies, "have heard the old folks say, that on Conygar Hill there is another passage which runs into the one leading from the priory, and that both communicate by a well-stair with the keep."

"I remember," said Master Luttrell, "hearing

me that he had heard the surgeon's report of the dagger's blade having glanced along your side instead of penetrating the lungs," said Giles.

"I suffered much, from loss of blood, and it not been for the kindness of Captain Hurstmonceau and the zeal of Alick Pearson, who between them bore me from the field and saved my wound, I must have died. But you bring some news? letters I trust from—from my friends," said Hugh.

Giles Tudball dived into the pocket concealed beneath his arm, and produced a small packet. Hugh opened it eagerly, and found the letter which Graveboys had discovered among Master Snelling's papers, and which, by the advice of Hurstmonceau, he had written for, enclosed to Master Luttrell, who, after stating that they were well in the West, referred him for particulars of their state to the bearer.

"And have you no other letter?" said Hugh, looking woefully disappointed.

"Those be all with which Master Luttrell trusted me; but here is another, which was put in my hands by Basil Chipera, who had

warn Colonel Wyndham," said Master Luttrell, "do you, dearest, lead Prudence and Lady Wyndham, within."

"I cannot go within—I shall choke if I be not in the open air. Oh God! hark to the shouts and the clang of weapons," said Prudence, as she leaned on Janet for support.

"I will be back in an instant," said Master Luttrell, releasing himself from his wife's grasp: "fear not; God will defend the right."

He rushed into the outer court, and found that the gates had been thrown open, and that the troops were sallying out on foot, for they had not had time to procure and mount their horses. Just as he passed under the arch of the gate, the report of a cannon was heard—the signal of alarm to their friends in the town. He hurried down the steep descent, and found his way as speedily as he could towards the scene of the struggle. All was dark when he left the Castle, but within a minute after the firing of the alarm-gun, lights appeared in all the windows, and he could see the carriage standing in the centre of the town, not far below the market-house, surrounded by a dense body of horsemen, engaged in a deadly struggle. Loud

shouts —“for the King!” “for the Parliament!—
“a Bachell! a Bachell” rent the air, mingled with
the clang of armour, the clashing of swords, and
the reports of pistols.

“Way there, way—for God’s sake let me pass,
if you be Dunster-men and loyal subjects,” shrieked
a man who was carrying a female in his arms.

“Hugh de Mohun!” said Master Luttrell.

“My good and kind friend,” said Hugh, “make
way for me I entreat of you, for I am well-nigh
exhausted. To the Castle—to the Castle!”

“But the Prince?” said Master Luttrell, hesi-
tating how to act.

“Is safe—and in my charge,” said Montagu;
“on sir, on to the Castle.”

Master Luttrell speedily cleared the way, and,
in a few minutes, Hugh had deposited his fainting
burden in the arms of Lady Wyndham and Mis-
tress Luttrell, and was sustaining the lovely form
of Prudence Everard, who, in the excitement
of the moment, had thrown herself upon his
breast.

Montagu put the young prince under the charge
of Master Luttrell, and was returning back to the
scene of the conflict to see to the safety of Made-

moiselle de Brevis's waiting-maid, but he met her at the hall-door in the care of Hurstmonceau, who had fought his way through the throng, and succeeded in saving the girl, but not without being severely wounded by a sabre-cut in his shoulder.

"In, in, sir," said Montagu, "this way; you will find the Prince and his guardian in safety."

As they entered the room, Marguerite was just recovering from her faintness. Her first thought was of her charge, whom she embraced with the tenderness of a mother, and when she had released him from her arms, she stared wildly on the strange faces around her, and eagerly asked where she was, and how she came there.

"Be not alarmed, lady, you are within the walls of Dunster Castle, and among friends," said Mistress Luttrell, soothingly.

"But how came I here? who saved me from the uplifted sabre of the horsemen that pursued me?" asked Marguerite.

"You owe your second deliverance from death, to my young friend here, Hugh de Mohun," said Walter Montagu, taking him by the hand, and leading him towards her

"Father of heaven, the hand of Thy providence

is in this! De Mohun, come hither—I thought to have borne the secret to the grave with me,” said Marguerite, as she fell into his arms, “but Nature is too powerful to be resisted. My son, my son! Oh God—it is too much; spare me, in thy mercy spare me!”

“Constance Lisle! the object of Buckingham’s secret love!—I see it all,” said Hurstmonceau.

“It is as I suspected,” said Walter Montagu, “but let us withdraw, ladies, and leave them to themselves. Mistress Luttrell, I give the Duke of York into your charge, and will go and see to the safety of our friends.”

“I will with you,” said Hurstmonceau. “I can still strike a blow with my left hand.”

“You are wounded? here Jefferies, do you see this gentleman to a room, and remove his armour, and I will shortly return and give proof that I have not forgotten the craft of a mediciner,” said Montagu.

When the party left the library, Hugh de Mohun was still supporting the clinging form of his mother on his left arm; his right was extended upwards, and his eyes raised to heaven in gratitude for the unexpected discovery of his parent.

But we must leave them for the present; and follow Montagu to the scene of the fight. The battle had been short; the victory decisive. The horsemen under Julian Bachell, hemmed in on all sides and overpowered by numbers, could not use their horses with good effect: they tried to dismount and fight on foot, but they were so closely jammed together that it was impossible: they fell one after another, many of them without being able to strike a blow, while their horses were stabbed or pistolled by the Dunster-men.

"Master Graveboys, or whatever it may please you to be called; come hither, and tell Master Quirke, whether there be life still left in this gentleman's body. I knew him not when I drove my knife so deeply into his side, or I might have withheld my hand, although he slew my mate, Will Bowering, and clove the thick skull of Alloway, the wrestler, as if it had been the head of a Christmas lamb," said Giles 'Tudball.

"Bring your torch this way," said Montagu, to a soldier, who was leaning on his sword and examining the body of a tall man that lay dead at his feet.

"I was merely taking a farewell glance at the

face of Roger Priver, to assure myself that my sword had done its work well," said Alick Pearson; "he is as dead as his old master, John Pym."

"Come hither, Pearson," said Montagu, "and tell me if you can recognise this wounded man."

Alick held the torch close to the man's face, which was smeared with blood and blackened by powder, and dropped the light as he fell on his knees, exclaiming "My young Master! that I should find thee thus—slain as a rebel, and amongst rebels!"

"It is Julian Bashell," said Quirke, "I knew him by his voice, as he rushed upon the carriage, and ordered Priver to seize the Prince and convey him to Ashley-Combe."

"His heart still beats, but faintly," said Montagu, after he had cut the strap of his breast-piece and passed his hand beneath it; "carry him carefully up to the Castle, whither I will follow you as soon as I have ascertained the fate of Colonel Wyndham and Master Luttrell."

"They are both safe and unhurt," said Basil Chipera, "and are doing their utmost to save the wounded from the Dunster-men, who are behaving more like devils than human beings."

"I will with you then at once," said Montagu, "for I shall be of more service in tending the wounded and relieving the anxiety of the ladies, than in helping their husbands to check the madness and fury of the soldiers."

A plank was procured, and Julian Bachell was carried up to the Castle by Giles and Quirke, who supported his head and shoulders, while Pearson and Chipera sustained the weight of his extremities. When they reached the castle, Montagu ordered them to convey him into the same room with Hurstmonceau, who was already undressed and impatiently awaiting the arrival of Montagu, and pleading hard for a draught of wine, with which old Jefferies refused to supply him, being fearful of producing inflammation.

"Drink water, sir—water," said the old man, "and if you be thirsty drink plentifully of it."

"Water be d—d," said the captain, "would'st have me poisoned with tadpoles?"

"Bind up his arm," said Montagu, "I will attend to his wants so soon as I shall have examined the wounds of Julian Bachell."

"Julian Bachell!" said Hugh de Mohun, as he entered the room, his eyes red with weep-

ing, and in search of Hurstmonçeau, "is he badly hurt?"

"Wounded severely, and I fear mortally," said Montagu, "but send Jansen hither."

"I am here, sir," said Jansen or Valentine Brooke.

"The drops—quick, and pour a little into his throat, whilst I stimulate his nostrils with this stuff," said Montagu, as he tore a bit of binding from the curtain and ignited it.

Alick Pearson stood over his young master, watching the effects of these applications, and when he saw him breathe convulsively and open his eyes, he fell on his knees and said, "Thank God he lives!"

Julian raised himself on his elbow and gazed around him; Hugh stepped forward and seized his hand, and whispered, "Julian, dearest Julian, I trust you are not badly wounded."

"Hugh de Mohun! I am a dying man:—touch me not—I cannot bear it. Speak to me not in kindly tones—I do not deserve it. I hate thee, even now, in these, my last moments, with a deadly hatred, and would have slain thee as I have been slain myself. You have stood between

hance of gaining more wounds than gold.
Our host, yester-e'en—curses light upon
or it!—presented his reckoning, and hint-
a wish to be paid: and there are the sur-
, and—in short, Master Hugh—I will not dis-
it from you, I have nothing left in the
of a coin of the realm.”

help yourself then, freely, my good friend;
ur landlord his due, and discharge my sur-
, after paying them liberally, for I fear not
I shall need their further services,” said
, as he tossed the bag, which Giles had
or him, into the captain’s lap.

will not question you as to how you came
is supply, but will—and that instantly—
with our host, who intimated to me a disin-
on to furnish further supplies of his medoc
he were paid for sundry pottles of it, al-
consumed,” said the captain.

ay, be not in such haste. I have news to
ou,” said Hugh.

will hear them on my return. I must as-
ur host of our solvency, and get a supply
ed wine to give me an appetite—which I

CHAPTER XX.

ON the morning of the second day of the conflict in the town of Dunster, Julian Bachell's body was conveyed from the Castle, and interred in the church of Porlock. Hugh de Mohun and Alick Pearson were the only mourners who attended; for the burial took place at an early hour in the day, and was, by the advice of Master Thomas Luttrell and Colonel Wyndham, conducted as privately as possible.

"Let us ride on, sir, to Ashley-Combe," said Alick, at the close of the ceremony. "I would fain know what hath become of Master Robert Browne, who, as it seems, urged my young master on to his fate."

"You may rest satisfied when I tell you that the news of Julian's defeat and death induced him

to quit this part of the country, and to fly to Lord Essex for protection," said Hugh. "Julian was the last of the Bachelles, and Ashley-Combe now belongs to a collateral branch, who, as they are bitter puritans, will, doubtless, thank the preacher for having ridded them of him who stood between them and the fair domains which called him master. Let us back to the Castle."

Pearson reluctantly obeyed, and as he rode after Hugh, the tears streamed from his eyes, when he turned his head over his shoulder to gaze on the woods that hid from his view the house wherein he had spent the greater portion of his days. A turn in the road shut them out from his sight, and, dashing away the tears with his hand, he endeavoured to forget the past in thinking of the future.

A short hour's ride brought them to the Castle. Hugh gave his horse to Alick, and was about to seek the family in the library; but he was met by old Jefferies, who told him that Master Montagu wished to speak with him in private.

"I give you joy, De Mohun," said Walter, as he seized Hugh by the hand. "Thanks to our friend Basil Chipera, here, the papers entrusted to the care of Master Robert Snelling—or Dynes, as

"You are late with your news, Master shanks," said the Captain, "so, unless furnish us with news of which we are as y rant, you had better leave Mohun to sleep if he be so disposed, and hurry back to progress of the preparations in which you to take so much delight."

Anthony, having heard from Hugh's letter he was much better, took the captain's horse and ran back to college, where he exerted as much as any of the hired workmen to matters for the Queen's coming.

however, that under the name of Hugh de Mohun he was uniting the youthful Marguerite de Brevis to the already-married and Protestant Duke of Buckingham; and, I may add, to misery."

"My poor mother!" said Hugh, as he flung himself on a chair and wept bitterly.

"M. De Brevis," continued Walter Montagu, on his return to England after learning his daughter's escape from the convent, discovered the imposition that had been practised upon her. He laid the matter before the King; and Hurstmonceaux, on being questioned, confessed that Constance Lisle was under the protection of his master. Angry words ensued, and the matter would have been made public, had not the duke, upon the King's threatening him with his lasting displeasure given up the lady to her father, with a promise of providing for the child that was about to be born to her, and never revealing to it the name of its parents. Your mother made the same promise of secrecy; and, after your birth, left you to the care of an aged nurse, a domestic servant of the King's, and returned to France. To Robert Snelling—or Dynes—alone, was the secret of your birth entrusted. He had long been in the duke's confi-

dence, and undertook your education—a task which he was well qualified to fulfil—and promised not to make you acquainted with the name of your father until you came to the age of twenty-one years. Then, as these writings will shew, he was to put you in possession of an estate in Normandy, but not to reveal to you the name of your mother, unless she herself sought you out and acknowledged you.”

“ Which she would not have done—for no one but her father and mine knew of her having been a mother—had not Providence, in its mercy, twice made me its instrument in saving her life,” said Hugh.

“ The ways of Providence are past finding out, my son,” said Montagu, solemnly. “ Your lot is cast upon fair ground: possessed of wealth—for Mademoiselle De Brevis, or Madame de Mohun, as she choseth henceforth to be called, is one of the richest subjects of King Louis—you may claim the hand of her whose heart has long been yours. Leave this land, Hugh, where civil discord rages, and where the dearest ties are disregarded, and in a foreign country seek the happiness that waits on requited love. For myself, I quit the Castle this

day; and, having placed the Duke of York with his brother, the Prince of Wales—for such are his gracious father's commands—I go to resume my duties about the Queen's person. I bid you farewell, Hugh de Mohun, and may God have you in his keeping! Whether we may ever meet again is one of those apparent chances that Providence alone directs. Farewell, and God bless you!"

Hugh de Mohun and Walter Montagu parted, never to meet again. Faithful to his royal mistress, Montagu followed her fortunes, until a severe attack of fever carried him off, shortly before the execution of the royal martyr.

Merrily pealed the bells from the old tower of the church of Dunster, and loudly roared the cannon on its Castle walls, as a large party of ladies, attended by a gallant train, rode through the town towards Minehead. Groups of peasantry and tradesfolk cheered them as they passed, and many a joyful face was wetted by a tear which had its source in a mingled feeling of gladness and sorrow.

"See you, Mistress Bowering, how gallantly he

is dressed, and how proudly he rides by the side of his fair bride?" said dame Tudball, addressing the widow of poor Will.

"I cannot bear to look upon him, for he hath, unwittingly I allow, been the cause of my bereavement," said the widow.

"Think of the bag of gold he sent you to comfort you in your affliction," said dame Tudball.

"I think more of his kindness in visiting me in my affliction, and pouring words of comfort into my ears; but Hugh de Mohun, with all his wild pranks, was ever kind and considerate," said the widow.

"Well, do look out, and take your last look of him—for he goes to France in Master Jenkins' cutter, and we may never see him again," said dame Tudball.

The widow looked out of her casement, and Hugh de Mohun lifted his hat from his brow, and saluted her as he passed. He also said something to his bride which induced Prudence to bend in her saddle to salute the dames.

"Now, a blessing be upon them both!" said the widow, as she applied her handkerchief to her eyes, and gave way to a hearty cry.

"Nay, do not weep; but view the gallant cavalcade," said dame Tudball. "See, there rides Sir John, and by his side good Master Thomas Luttrell, and behind them is a gay soldier-man, who sits so loosely in his saddle, that I should say that he had been indulging somewhat too freely over the wine-cup, did not the kerchief in which his arm is slung, prove that he is suffering from a wound; and see, as I live, there is my good-for-nought! drunk; I vow he is drunk, and leans on old Robin Quirke for support, who is well-nigh as drunk as himself."

"With joy, doubtless," said the widow.

"With wine, woman, with wine, I tell you; and there is Basil Chipera, shouting like a madman, and old Jefferies, the butler, keeping him company in spite of his years. And, look you, who think you is she that rides so gaily beside her gallant, who is as fine as a jay-pie after moulting?" asked the dame rather spitefully.

"Nay, I cannot tell, they be strangers to me," said the widow.

"Strangers indeed! who should they be but Alick Pearson and Miss Janet Hodge, late of

Ashley-Combe Lodge. They should be in deep mourning, I think, and they had any respect for their late master," said dame Tudball.

"But they were married this morning, as Master Richard Luckes tells me, and it is an ill omen to be wedded in black," said the widow looking mournfully at her own sables.

"Let us to the quay and see the last of them," said the dame, as she dragged the resisting widow from the casement and hurried her down the stairs.

They reached the pier just as the party had dismounted. Hugh de Mohun assisted his mother and his wife on board the *St. David*, and Alick Pearson, with Janet on one arm, and the waiting-woman of his mistress on the other, followed him: the warps were cast off, the gallant little bark rose upon the waves, impelled by a favouring wind and amidst the shouts of some and the tears of others, bore Hugh de Mohun from the shores of England for ever.

Something remains to be said of the fate that attended those who have played their parts in this our little drama.

Robert Quirke died at a good old age, after he had seen his alms-houses endowed and inhabited by aged paupers, and finding himself dull in his lonely home, engaged the services of the widow Bowering to wait upon him, and talk over old times with him. The widow, long after his death, and when she was in her dotage would hint at certain visits that were paid them in the dead of the night by an old woman clad in a grey cloak, and who screamed so like a sea-mew, that she believed her to be old mother Lecky of whom her poor departed Will, used to stand in so much dread.

Giles Tudball, shortly after his wife's death, having no occasion to bestow his gains, as he had intended to do, on Hugh de Mohun, sold his premises and his good ship the Blossom of Minehead, and turned all his other worldly goods into money, which he loyally paid into the King's exchequer, and was rewarded for his zeal and liberality, by being appointed a special messenger to the court, an office that he would have discharged admirably from his knowledge of the country, had he not been discovered in Essex's army by Master Robert Browne, and shot as a spy.

Master Jenkins was never seen at Minehead after he quitted it with Hugh de Mohun. He bought a little estate near to the town of Cardiff, for which he paid in French gold. The St. David, however, continued to ply to Minehead, under the command of Mabel's husband.

Old Jefferies died during the siege of Dunster Castle by Colonel Blake, killed, as some said, by the sudden announcement of its surrender incautiously made to him by Basil Chipera.

As to Basil himself, he continued to prune his myrtles, and train his lemon-tree on the southern wall, bestowing some of his leisure moments on Prynne, who was imprisoned in the castle. He assisted him in collecting together the charters and muniments of the Luttrells, and the Mohuns until death called upon him and he was borne to that church in which he had officiated as parish clerk.

Hurstmonceaux, to his own surprise, and the amazement of his friends, died sober. He fell into the hands of the Puritans, who feasted him to the full for three days, in order to extort from him an important secret. The plan failed. The Captain drank deeply, and abused the rebels as

he drank; but rigidly refused to reply to any question that was put to him. Vexed at their ill success, they tried a different system—limited him to bread and fair water for another three days. The captain refused to taste the good things provided for him: d—d them more bitterly than before; and as he submitted his neck to the noose, he spat at them, and, laying great emphasis on the word, called them—Rechabites!

Dunster Castle, in its renovated state, is an object of interest to all tourists. The kindness, and affability of the gentleman who now owns it—a direct descendant of the Master Thomas Luttrell, whose name appears in these pages—ensure easy access to all who wish to inspect it.

END OF VOL. III.

POSTSCRIPTUM.

COURTEOUS READER,

My tale has come to an end more abruptly than I had intended it should. I was compelled, however, to bring it to a speedy conclusion, lest other hands should have to finish what mine had begun.

Picture to yourself a healthy, middle-aged gentleman, with a family of—I am afraid to say how many—motherless children, being compelled, by authority, to quit the bracing air of the Berkshire Downs, and take up his abode in a cottage newly-erected on a half-redeemed snipe-bog, in the hundreds of Essex; migrating, as it were, from the dry, pure regions about Hampstead, to the foggy coast of Holland. Such was my case.

Well; although two of my little ones were

“down with the *ager*” and my housekeeper, taking quinine in such copious doses, that she wished she had friends in Peru to supply her with the raw material, I bore up against it manfully. I was never without a spade or a pen in my hand, and got on—I was about to say, swimmingly; but the water of the snipe bog is so thick, that even frogs are never seen to take a cold-bath in it—so substitute any other adverb you may please for it.

This lasted until my children went to their schools, and I was left *alone*; then came a succession of letters, each conveying the tidings of the death of some literary friend. I need not name them. My spirits sunk, my energies deserted me, and in the stillness of night I asked myself “who is to be the next victim?” I thought of my children depending on my exertions alone for maintenance, and fancied that the air I breathed was surcharged with those hideous aquatic monsters that are revealed to us by the powers of the oxygen microscope. I could not rid myself of the idea that my lungs were filled with them, and that every successive inspiration must prove my death by suffocation. Morning came,

and I set myself down to complete this my little work, which I feel assured will prove my *last* work unless Providence, in its mercy, raises me up a friend *able* as well as *willing* to remove me from a spot too damp even for the lungs of a Newfoundland dog. You may smile at this as the idea of a madman, but it is the fact; the faithful companion of my walking hours died this morning of an inflamed throat, of precisely the same nature as that from which his master is still suffering.

Well; I hastened to complete my tale, sent it to the printer, and have been an invalid ever since. I write not thus to "disarm the critics," but simply to engage your sympathy, COURTEOUS READER, and I throw myself back on my bed of sickness, assuring you that

I am your very humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.

Oct. 17th, 1845.

Some smoked and drank, as they talked over their exploits and adventures, others trolled the roystering songs of the time; but the majority danced with maidens of the city and the adjoining villages, whose ignorance, or want of modesty, prevented them from perceiving the impropriety of such conduct.

"There is fun abroad, Hugh," said Wood, as he sat at his open casement, after the captain had left them. "Hark, to the shouting, the singing, and the music! let us out and join them."

"No, no, Master Anthony!" replied Hugh, "you add not to the dangers that beset you, with my consent."

"Dangers—what mean you?" asked Wood.

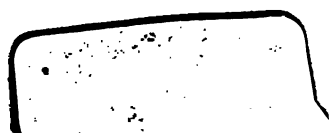
"Merely that Dr. Brent may chance to be angry that you have housed one in your rooms who got into College in an unlawful manner, and against all orders," said Hugh.

"A *that* for the warden!" said Anthony snapping his fingers, "let him look to himself; if resort speak the truth for once, he is likely to be removed from his wardenship to give place to a more loyal man."









arranging her fair tresses, and account for the fire, that for a with dangerous consequences."

"The young lady thus app she replied, that "she could occurred, until she found her couch by the arms of a powerful was strongly tainted with the tobacco;" a speech that was versal smile, and provoked th Queen and her ladies to make the subject.

Marguerite de Brevis could she had been alarmed by the entering her apartment by th

copious application of cold water; and that, after she had revived, the persons who had extinguished the fire, left the room immediately, and gave her an opportunity of seeking the rest she so much needed.

Ninon D'Arcy confirmed this part of her story, but intimated that the gentlemen, who had so bravely come to their rescue, had not left without explaining to them to whom they were indebted for their preservation.

"We were assured that all the students had been removed from within these walls, save one, a mere boy, called Anthony Wood," said the Queen. "Confide to us, dear Marguerite, the name of your rescuer."

Marguerite de Brevis looked confused, and did not reply.

The Queen looked at Ninon D'Arcy. The young lady understood the meaning of the look; and replied to it, by saying, that "she heard the younger intruder call himself Hugh de Mohun, and the other gentleman give the name of Hurstmonçeau."

The Queen turned her looks upon Marguerite de Brevis. It was well she did so, for scarcely had

the names of her rescuers passed the fair lips, when she found it necessary to catch the young lady in her arms, and cause her to be carried to her apartment.

"Take great care of her," said the Queen, resigned Marguerite to her attendants. "Use the usual remedies, and should they fail, acquaint with the fact, that we may call in the aid of a physician. Mademoiselle de Brevis hath been so kind and attentive to us in our trouble, that we merit our warmest love."

When the ladies had left the room with the patient, the Queen called Ninon D'Arcy and questioned her further on the events of that night; but Ninon had nothing further to say excepting that she thought the younger lady the handsomest youth she had ever seen, and he bore a striking resemblance to Marguerite.

"There is a mystery hangs over de Brevis," said the Queen, "which I have never been able to fathom. That she has endured much suffering is clear. She has scarcely seen some eight and twenty summers, yet her hair is turned gray, her eyes have lost their brilliancy, and her cheeks

leadly pale. When the King comes to visit us, we will beg of him to summon this youth, who rendered you such good service, and thank him for his timely and judicious aid. Now leave us, Ninon, and take your post beside the couch of Marguerite: fail not to report it to us, if any unfavourable symptoms present themselves."

Ninon D'Arcy had not quitted the room many minutes, before the King's approach was announced. He came attended only by the little Duke of York, and for half an hour the cares of state were forgotten. The King was merely the father, the Queen the mother, and the Prince the child.

After a while the King enquired why he had found the Queen alone. She told him of the alarm to which Mademoiselle De Brevis had been subjected on the previous night and her consequent illness. At the mention of her rescue by two officers, the King seemed greatly surprised, and not a little offended, for he had given positive orders that a guard should be stationed without the walls of the College, and no one admitted within them, but the Queen's maids-in-waiting and her ecclesiastics.

"And who v
dared to disobey

The Queen to
man, named Hu
captain, in comm
who bore the na

"The former,
merit and of gre
the latter, thoug
cup—he was or
Buckingham—is
cause. We will
in private, why t

"And thank t
Queen.

"If they dese
us niggard in bes
rupted," replied
knowing that hi
entered the roc
Brevis had recove
to resume her d
mistress.

"Bid her res

non her to attend us at the hall of this age."

non left the room again, to deliver this kind age; and the King and Queen, after a further guy on family matters, parted, to prepare for ass pleasing duties of state affairs.

out an hour afterwards, Hugh de Mohun and tmonçeau, who had left the College together a early hour, and seen the guard relieved, seated in Hugh's room, at the Blue Boar, rsing with Anthony Wood, or, more strictly ring, listening to the account of his adven- during the past night, and his fears of the quences that might follow the active part he taken in the fun and frolic of the scene.

shall be rusticated, if not expelled," said ony, as he finished his narration; "especially e warden recognised me as I dropped down him in his hiding-place."

tush! tush! Master Longshanks, let Dr. t look to himself. He will have enough to r I am wrongly informed, to keep his head his shoulders. At all events, his reign as en of Merton is over," said Hurstmonçeau.

"What may be the meaning of your v
enquired Hugh.

"Simply this: his treachery has been m
to the King. The Chancellor of the Un
the Lord Pembroke, hath deprived him
wardenship by the royal command, and l
be at this moment a prisoner in the
Oxford, with precious Master Parker, of V
had they not contrived to escape at an ea
this morning. They are, doubtless, on t
to join' Lord Essex, near St. Albans, to
his thanks for their treachery in plotting
to seize upon and destroy the city and
of Oxford."

"Huzzah!" shouted Anthony, "I am
punishment from him, and care not a fico
thing now."

"His Majesty would see Colonel de
and Captain Hurstmonçeau instantly. Hi
are, moreover, that Colonel de Mohun do t
him the Merton student, who received h
his rooms, against the express commande
King," said a soldier, without announcing
sence by knocking at the door.

Hugh and Hurstmonçeau, bowed to the officer who had delivered the message, and promised to follow him as soon as they had arranged their dress; but poor Wood was too much frightened to be able to rise from his seat. He gazed upon the bearer of the royal mandate, and upon his friends, who were hastening their toilet, in a manner so nervous and agitated, and made so many grimaces that they burst into a hearty laugh.

"It is no laughing matter," said Wood; "but I will tell the truth if I am committed to the Castle for it. I did not invite Master Hugh to my rooms and—"

"Nay but you received me, gave me a supper and lodged me," said Hugh.

"I could not turn you out, had I been so inclined—but never mind, I am of little use in the world, and a few months between stone walls may do me good," groaned out Anthony.

"Courage, sir; certain ladies, if I am rightly informed, are indebted to you and these gentlemen for important services rendered to them in the night. You may rely on the Queen's protection: she loves Mademoiselle de Brevis too much to

allow a favour done to her to remain unrec-
said the officer.

"Then, huzzah again!" said Wood, "my legs be somewhat long, I generally can fall upon them."

"While you wait for us, would it please sir, to take a—seat; said Hurstmonçeau, tuting the last word for a "flagon of wine he saw Hugh regarding him sternly. "beg of you to take a morning draught; but were an unseemly request, at this early hour

The Officer bowed; but smiled as he did he saw a certain unsteadiness in the movements, which indicated, that he had taken a something to refresh him."

"We are at your service, sir;" said "shew us to the King's presence."

The Officer led them to Christ Church C and passing under an arched gateway, opening the large quadrangle, gave the word to a who was stationed at a narrow-door on the hand, and was admitted into the dean's lodgings with those who followed him.

"Wait here, gentlemen, while I am

you," said the officer, leaving them in the entrance-hall, and turning into the library of the dean, which lay on the right.

"They had not waited many minutes, before Prince Rupert, with Hyde, afterwards Lord Clarendon, came out of the same doorway, by which their conductor had entered. The Prince addressed Hugh, and demanded of him the cause of his being summoned before the King. Hugh explained, as briefly as he could, all that happened on the previous night; and the Prince, bidding Hyde farewell for the present, offered to accompany Hugh and his friends to the King's presence, and befriend them should it be necessary. His offer was gladly accepted; and, when the officer signed to them to approach, he entered with them, and passing up the table, at the head of which the King was seated, took his station behind his chair and whispered a few words in his ear.

"It is not needed, Rupert," said the King, "we have no fears that Colonel Hugh de Mohun, and Captain Hurstmonceaux, and that youth there, cannot explain matters to our satisfaction. What we would know is, by what means, and for what reason

they were within the walls of Merton (contrary to our express orders."

"May it please your Majesty," said Wood, so nervously, and bowing in so ridiculous manner, as to cause the King and the Prince to smile, "I was permitted to retain my residence in Merton, seeing that I was a mere child, of innocent habits; and notorious, moreover, for the indecent conduct of demeanour towards the fair sex."

"And I, may it please your Majesty," said Hurstmonceaux, "did but take the duties of a college porter upon me, while that officer shared his share with his fellow-servants in the joy and happiness occasioned by the safety and presence of our gracious Queen."

"What says Colonel Hugh de Mohun," said the King, "will he explain to us, the cause of his being within the College walls?" enquired the King.

Hugh bowed, and told the King that he had resigned his lodging to the use of some of the Queen's officers, who were unprovided with accommodation; and, having been formerly a student in Merton, and knowing that Anthony Wood could and would accommodate him for on

he had gained access to his rooms by a private way.

“Contrary, as we have said, to our express commands,” said the King, looking sternly.

Hugh dropped his eyes upon the ground, and did not reply.

“We gladly see that you do not resort to falsehood, and plead a want of knowledge of our orders,” said the King.

“May it please your gracious Majesty,” stammered Wood, in a sad state of alarm for his friend Hugh, “he hath been ill from a wound received in Chalgrove Field, where he slew John Hampden, and he had not a place to shelter him, but my poor apartments; and may it—”

“Enough, boy; we require not to be reminded of the colonel’s services. We freely pardon him, and the more readily, as he has, with your help, as it seems, done our Queen a service, in saving two of her ladies from imminent danger.”

The King held out his hand, and the three having saluted it, were retiring from the presence; when they were recalled by the King, who said, in consequence, it appeared, of something that Prince

Rupert had whispered to him, "Our Queen has a levee in the hall of Merton at high noon. You have our permission to present yourself before her, and receive her thanks for your rescue of her ladies."

Anthony Wood was so delighted at the prospect of being admitted to the Queen's court and introduced to her notice, that it was with great reluctance, that Hurstmonceaux and Hugh could stop to his bowing to the King, and withdrawing him from his presence. His joy seemed to cause so much merriment to Prince Rupert, that he laughed heartily; and it caused a passing pleasure to shew itself on the features of the King, all unused as they were to joyous smiles.

CHAPTER XIV.

No sooner had the great bell of Christ Church cathedral announced the hour of twelve, than the gates of Merton were thrown open. A crowd of ladies, attended by their male friends, pressed eagerly through a line of the life-guards, who were drawn up on either side, so as to form a lane from the outer gates to the doors of the hall. The Queen was seated on a temporary throne, at the upper end of the room. She was dressed in a robe of state, but on her head, instead of a crown or jewelled ornament of any kind, she wore a wreath, in which the rose, the thistle, and the lily of France were combined. The King and the Duke of York were seated by her side. Behind her stood the Princes Rupert and Maurice,

and the principal officers of state. The ladies of her household were placed on her left, and the priests were stationed immediately behind them.

Hugh de Mohun, Hurstmonceaux, and Adam Wood took up a position on one side of the hall which enabled them to see the ladies and gentlemen of Oxfordshire, Berkshire, and the adjacent counties, as they passed before and were presented to their Majesties, who, as they extended their right hands to be kissed by them, made some remark to each, complimentary to the loyalty and zeal of their families.

When all the country gentlefolks and ladies had been presented, and retired from the hall, Hugh and his friends followed in the train of the deputations from the University and the cities, who, the one by their Chancellor, and the other by their Mayor, presented addresses to the King, congratulating her on her safe arrival among them, and promising to exert themselves to reinstate her and her husband on that throne from which their enemies threatened to exclude them.

The Lord Pembroke was welcomed, but with cold looks; for certain charges had been

against him by the University, which, upon investigation, caused him to be deposed from his office. His successor was the Marquis of Hertford, of whose loyalty no one entertained a doubt.

When it came to his turn to be presented to the Queen, Hugh modestly knelt before her. The King, upon whom, as our readers will be kind enough to remember, his features had made an impression, upon his first introduction to him, whispered a few words to the Queen, who regarded him stedfastly before she addressed him.

“Colonel Hugh de Mohun, we have to thank you for services rendered to our friend Marguerite de Brevis, during the past night. We regret that the excitement caused by her danger has been so great as to render it desirable that she should not attend upon us at this our levee. There is a lady here, however, who will assure you that those whom you rescued from impending danger are not ungrateful for your services. Ninon D’Arcy, step forth, and thank the Colonel and his friend, Captain Hurstmonceau for—”

“’Twere better not,” said the King, as he ob-

served poor Ninon D'Arcy ready to sink to earth, "a more fitting season may be found."

"Well then," said the Queen, smiling and spoke, "We will be guided by you, and I will save Ninon from this public display of her gratitude but we will reward her rescuers by inviting them to be present at the play with which Mr. William Davenant hath offered to entertain us this evening, in the hall of Christ Church."

"You will, I trust, include in your invitation this youth, a student of this house, who seems more than half afraid to claim a share in the rescue of your ladies," said the King.

Anthony Wood shuffled about, and made so nervous an acknowledgment of the King's goodness, and at last fell upon his knees, and seized Majesty's hand in so clownish a manner that Henrietta and all about her could not but join in a hearty laugh at the boy's expense.

Hugh de Mohun and Hurstmonceaux raised him from the ground; and, when the Queen had signified to him that he was to be included in the invitations to the hall, led him away.

As they passed the group of ladies, I

D'Arcy curtsied to them, her cheeks being painfully suffused with blushes. Hurstmonceau returned her salutation most respectfully, and bade Anthony Wood follow his example. Hugh de Mohun, who had just released the boy from his grasp, bowed to the fair girl, resumed his upright position and was about to move on, when he was surprised to see one of the ecclesiastics, who stood immediately behind her, dressed in his full canonicals, look fixedly at him; and, placing his right hand within his vest, give him a glimpse of a small cross set with brilliants.

Hugh at once recognised the jewelled ornament as belonging to Aaron Graveboys, and was about to step forward to ascertain if, in the richly-clad ecclesiastical, the mediciner was before him, when he was checked by the person who had exhibited the jewel placing the index finger of his right-hand upon his lips. He hastily followed Hurstmonceau and Wood, and left the presence-chamber in a state of bewilderment. That the token was the same that the quacksalver of Somersetshire had bidden him remember, he could not doubt; but to find it in the hands of one of the Queen's

ecclesiastics, who bore no resemblance to boys, except in his stature, puzzled him exceedingly. He was strongly tempted to ask of monçeau, who was rallying Wood upon his nervousness in the presence of royalty, the names of the churchmen who were in attendance upon the Queen; but he checked himself, and resolved to await the disclosure, which he was almost sure would be made to him by Graveboys himself.

He had scarcely reached his hostel, and given orders for their dinners to be served; when a letter was placed in his hands by Alick Pearson, which said that he had received it from a page dressed in the royal livery, with strict orders to deliver it into his master's own hands, and to bid him read it when he was alone.

Hugh entered his sleeping-room, and tore open the covering, which was sealed with wax and stamped with the royal arms. A small sheet of paper within bade him "not to fail being sent in the hall of Christ Church—to take notice of any one to whom he might fancy himself known, but to meet the wearer of the diamond cross, near to the ruins of the palace of Bea-

without the northern gate of the city, as the clock struck the hour of ten."

"I would not be rude, De Mohun," said the Captain, as Hugh returned from his sleeping-room, "but I would fain know if the missive, which Pearson delivered so carefully, comes from the old lady, who was too much agitated to appear in the presence this day, or from the younger one, with whose fair form and features, I confess myself to be captivated."

"She is an angel," said Anthony Wood, who had not yet recovered from his bewilderment: "saw you how she bowed to me?"

Hugh smiled at Wood, and replied to the captain, that the note he had received, was from one of their own sex, who requested him to meet him without the walls, on particular business, after the gates were closed; a piece of information, which the captain received with a very peculiar look, fully implying that he did not believe one word of it. During the dinner, and over his wine, he rallied Hugh on his good fortune, and begged permission to fill a goblet to the health of "the rescued one;" and would have repeated the toast so

often, as to have incapacitated him from presenting himself at the play, to which he had been consciously invited, had not Hugh positively prohibited the introduction of more wine.

"I am your guest," said the captain, smiling, "and I cannot do otherwise than submit to the regulations, which, as I am aware, are founded upon motives of economy, but upon a mistaken notion of my inability to carry a gentleman's quantum of wine, without disgracing myself."

"Not so;" said Hugh, "when the play is over, you have my free permission to indulge yourself, but the King, as you know, is averse to that species of loyalty which displays itself in disobedience deeply to the success of the royal cause."

"An loyalty and sobriety united becometh more worthy of the royal favour," said Wood, "than I put in my claim for a share of it."

"And call the mayor's serjeant and the Legges to bear testimony in your favour," said the captain.

"Exceptions—mere exceptions, to prove a general rule," said Anthony.

The captain was about to expatiate largely

his favourite theme, moderation in the wine-cup, but was prevented by Hugh, who bade him follow him to Christ Church, in order that they might be in time to secure a favourable spot for seeing the court and hearing the play.

"The perspectives of the stage," as the scenery and proscenium were then called, were placed at the upper end of the hall, and seats were arranged for the royal auditors and their attendants on either side of them. The guests who had been honoured by invitations to be present filled the body of the hall. What was said by Archbishop Laud when, a few years before, he entertained his royal master and mistress at St. John's College will apply here.

"The College was so well furnished as that they did not borrow any one actor from any College in town. The play was upon a piece of a Persian story. It was well penned and acted; and the strangeness of the Persian habits gave great content, so that all men came forth from it very well satisfied. The Queen liked it so well that she begged for the dresses that she might have her own players to act it over again and

see whether they could do it as well as done in the University."

As the poet had not failed to stuff his full of sentiments replete with loyalty, and flattering to the personal graces of the Queen her fair visitors, the effort of his muse was greeted, and he himself enthusiastically re with shouts of applause, when he appeared Queen's command, to receive her thanks entertainment that he had afforded her.

It was about eight o'clock when the Queen the hall to take her supper with the King, vate. As soon as she had disappeared, the throng were mingled together promiscuous partook of such refreshments as had been prepared for them. Hugh anxiously examined the of ladies in attendance on the Queen, as they persed themselves among the visitors, but not discover either Ninon D'Arcy or her friend kept a watchful eye upon the ecclesiastics and the person who had attracted his attention morning, by exhibiting the jewelled cross, v among them.

Feeling no further interest in the busy

he gave Wood in charge of Hurstmonçeau, and left the College to exchange his gay apparel for his regimental suit, and to obtain from the governor of the city a pass that would enable him to leave the walls and re-enter them at any moment he wished. When he had effected his purpose he returned to his rooms at the hostelry to take his supper, and while away the hour that was to elapse before he went to meet his mysterious friend in the ruins of Beaumont palace.

He found Hurstmonçeau, who had just returned from seeing his charge safely within the gates of Merton, indulging in copious libations of Medoc, and severely censuring those whose duty it had been to supply the Queen's guests with a refection, for having mingled so much of the pure element with the wine as to make it unpalatable, and fitted only for the stomachs of those who were unused to undiluted drinks.

"I tell thee, Mohun, and I say it in all sincerity, that the continued imbibition of such vile trash as we were furnished with this day would render us disloyal to a man."

"Lay the blame where it ought to be laid," said

Hugh smiling, "upon the manciple and but the College who, no doubt, did not forget selves and their friends in apportioning wine."

"I would that I were Dean of Christ but for half an hour: I would expel even of them who took a part in so vile a consaid the captain.

"What thought you of the play?" asked to divert the mind of his friend.

"Dull stuff, Sir: very dull stuff, and all unworthy of the son of a sufficient vint Will's father is reputed to be, who hath the Crown Inn in the Corn-market for many He must have denied his son access to wines, and confined him to such vile potations have been compelled to resort to this eve; and a curse light upon those who have injured their mach by such unseemly drinks!"

"Well—well—console yourself with the you love so much, until I return; when gladly share your last bottle with you, Hugh.

"Drink, now," said the Captain, pouring

huge goblet of claret, "for who knows what an hour may bring forth? you may be—"

"I fear no harm from him, whom—"

"*Her*—be honest for once, and say *her* whom you are going to meet, and drink to her health like a man; being assured, by one experienced in such matters, that the kiss that smacketh of the wine-cup is more acceptable than the lips of one unacquainted with the ruberity of the grape," said the captain; holding forth the goblet to Hugh, who, to indulge his friend, took a slight draught to the health of the "rescued fair ones:" and left the room.

As old Tom of Oxford, or the great bell of Christ Church, commenced tolling out the hour of ten, two men might have been seen turning into a narrow passage, opposite to the church of St. Mary Magdalene, without the northern walls. This passage was, and is still, known by the name of Friars' Entry, and gave access, across Gloucester Green and over the Hythe bridge, to the abbey of Rewley, on the banks of a branch of the Isis.

The stouter of the two men, both of whom were covered with large cloaks, although the night was

oppressively hot. stopped just before he the narrow passage, and turned to gaze northern gate, known by the name of and famed, as having been the place of imprisonment of the martyred bishops.

“He cometh not; he will not fail me for much depends upon him.”

“Wine and women have been known to as goodly a youth, as Hugh de Mohun matters of business, ere now,” replied the companion.

“You do him wrong, to hint as much,” said the other. “We will on to the ruins, and I doubt that we shall find him arrived there before

They crossed the green in front of Gloucester hall, or Worcester college, as it is now called, turning a little to the right, under a tall lofty stone wall, reached a small gothic archway. The door opened as they pressed against it, and admitted them to an extensive meadow, in the midst of which were the ruins of what had been the palace of King John. They were now surrounded by a barn and sheds for cattle. The two merchants cautiously round them, and then cross

meadow at a rapid pace, and halted below a low circular-arched door, which led into the interior of the building.

"Who goes there?" asked Hugh, stepping forth.

"Friends, who greet thee well, De Mohun."

"Graveboys and Jansen, or I am mistaken," said Hugh, taking the proffered hand of each.

"Know us as such still," said the former, "and now listen to what I have to say, and let not a syllable escape you."

Hugh pressed the hand he held in token of assent.

"Your presence is needed in the West. Julian Bachell hath received supplies of men and ammunition from the parliament, and is about to attack Dunster, where all you hold dear are in danger. The Duke of York travels westward at dawn to-morrow, under the care of Marguerite de Brevis. I have obtained from the Prince Rupert an order for yourself and Hurstmonceaux to escort them with a troop of trusty horsemen. I will join you on the road—probably in my old disguise, and will not fail to give you such information regarding myself as you are justified in requiring. Now

hasten back to your hostel; and let no soul know of the captain and Alick Pearson know of leaving Oxford at dawn, and do not let even know that you leave it to protect the Duke of York. We would hide his movements from those who seek to obtain possession of his person in order to hold him as an hostage for his grandfather's submission to their tyranny. Now is the night—see that the captain refrains from the last cup; and fail not to be without the south wind before the sun shall have risen.”

Hugh pressed Graveboys' hand, and strode tily back to his inn; where he informed the monk and Pearson, that they must be prepared to set out with him upon a long journey at the dawn.

“So to take the share I promised you I will take, of your last pottle, and to bed,” said Hugh.

“Let it be a magnum, then, I entreat of you,” said the captain, “for my stomach hath as yet recovered from the vile—”

“Enough, for once, I consent,” said Hugh, “seeing, that it may be the last cup that we shall quaff together in Oxford.”

CHAPTER XV.

WHEN Hugh de Mohun and Hurstmonçcau, followed by Alick Pearson, had ridden without the south gate, and crossed over what is now called the Folly Bridge, they were met by a single trooper, who presented a billet to Hugh, in which he was ordered to ride forward to the foot of Hincksey hill, and there wait for the parties whom he was to escort. The trooper accompanied them, saying that he was to act as their guide for a time; and, just as the sun rose in all its glories, they reached the edge of Bagley wood, and reined up their horses beneath the shade of an aged oak, that threw its spreading branches over the roadway.

They had not waited long before they saw a

light carriage approaching them, drawn by powerful horses, which were driven by a man was armed, according to the custom, or rather necessity, of the times. It was guarded, moreover, by two servants in plain dark suits, who rode in its rear. As the leathern curtains were drawn closely around it, the persons of those within could not be seen.

The trooper who had delivered the message to Hugh preceded the carriage, and rode slowly up the long and tedious ascent; but, instead of turning to the left towards Abingdon, he continued on his straight course; and when he had descended the narrow lane down Foxcombe hill, conducted by cross-roads, scarcely passable for a carriage, he turned the village of Marcham, to Frilford Heath, and thence to Kingston's inn. There they were met by a score of Prince Rupert's dragoons, who, at their own selves under Hugh de Mohun's orders, bade them fall in behind the carriage, at a convenient distance as would enable them to keep it in view, and be ready to assist him, if any attack should be made upon it.

Their guide, who seemed to know ever

of the ground, turned from the main road that would have led them to Faringdon, and conducted them over a flat country, crossed here and there by deep brooks, passable only at certain fords, and, after a slow and toilsome journey, of some four hours' duration, brought them to a village bearing the name of Stoneford, or Stanford. In the midst of this village stood a religious house, where certain ancient ladies spent the remainder of their days, after the world had ceased to appreciate their charms, or to hold out further charms to them.

It was evident that the arrival of the carriage was expected; for no sooner had it entered the village than the gate of the outer court was thrown open, and the moment it was within it, closed again, excluding those who had escorted it.

"This is what I term most uncivil treatment," said Hurstmonçeau, looking indignant. "Here have we been toiling through a burning sun for hours, and, when a prospect of breaking our fast and slaking our thirst presents itself, lo and behold, we have the gate slammed in our very faces!"

"Fear not, sir captain; rely upon it the arrangements have been made for our reference," said Hugh.

"I might think so, did I but see a sign in the air, to intimate the locality of an habitation, but, besides this inhospitable hospital, or whatever else it may be, I see nought but a few of the very humblest order."

"If it will please you, sir, to follow me as the guide, riding up to Hugh, "I will lead you to a place where provision has been made for your reception."

"I trust we have not far to ride, fellow countryman of Hurstmonceaux; "for, to say the truth, we are greatly in need of some of those provisions which you make allusion to."

"A short ride across those meadows will lead us to the spot," said the guide.

"On then, sir, and lose no time," said the guide.

"Would it please Colonel Hugh de Morsington to inform his humble friend, Captain Hurstmonceaux, why he is so uncommunicative as to the whereabouts of those who are snugly ensconced in yon religious house after having been rumbled about in the caleches some hours?"

"Of that you must be content to remain in ignorance—for a time at least," replied Hugh. "It is not that your loyalty is doubted, but your discretion."

"And when has my discretion ever been questioned?" asked the captain, angrily.

"Never—before breakfast," said Hugh, smiling.

"I understand your meaning, sir: but the deepest wine-cup that ever was quaffed never affected my brains to such an extent, as to cause my tongue to reveal a secret of importance," said Hurstmonceau, snuffing the air like a chafed and eager war-horse.

"I act not of my own free-will in the matter—I am under orders not to betray the names of those who have been placed under my charge."

"Enough—enough, Hugh; a soldier could make no better reply, nor one more satisfactory to a comrade: let us ride on, for, as my eyes deceive me not, yonder swings in the air, a goodly sign, to intimate, that creature-comforts may be had beneath it."

The jaded horses seemed to entertain the same notion as the captain, for they pricked up their

ears, and pushed on for the spot, without requiring the application of the spur.

"The leathern bottle!—a goodly sign even if it do but contain good liquor," said Hurst, as he dismounted and gave his bridle to Pearson.

"If you will follow me, gentlemen," said the guide, "I will shew you to a private apartment where preparations have been made for your refectation."

Hugh and the captain passed through the hall into a small parlour, the window of which opened upon a little flower-garden. On the table were spread the solid materials for an excellent fast, flanked by sundry bottles of foreign wine of various and shape.

"I will see that the troopers and their horses are well cared for, gentlemen, and then I must request you to return to Oxford to report our unobstructed progress thus far. Should you have a letter to be conveyed to that city, I will gladly convey it for you. Another guide will supply my place, and will conduct you further, so soon as two hours have passed."

"I thank you, guide," said the captain, "but the conveyance of my baggage having been provided for, I have left nought behind me that I require, unless it might be, a runlet of our late host's Medoc."

"I will write a short note, and—"

"Not before we have refreshed ourselves," said the captain, earnestly.

"And beg of you to deliver it to Master Wood, a student in Merton College," said Hugh.

The guide bowed and left the room. The captain immediately fell upon a fine quarter of lamb, and moistened it with repeated draughts from a jack of what he pronounced sufficiently mild ale. Hugh followed his example, and for some minutes the vigorous attack upon the viands before them produced a cessation of all speech.

At last, Hugh threw down his knife and fork, and filled a goblet of wine, which he drank to the health of "the mysterious travellers." The captain was not long in following his example, and, as he replaced the empty goblet on the board, gave a hearty smack with his lips, and declared that "he had never tasted finer Beaune-wine, even from the cellars of his late master, the duke."

"While you drink thereof in moderation, —I will write a few words of farewell to Anthony Wood, for I have a presentiment I shall never see him again," said Hugh.

"We will drink to his health," said the man who deemed it a fair excuse for a second glass of Beaune.

"You may do so—but I take no more wine to-morrow," said Hugh.

"And yet you call the boy your friend," said the captain.

Hugh smiled, as he rang a small silver bell to procure materials for writing. The servant answered the signal, and waited while the note was being written. He then took it from Hugh and requested him to give him a note to Colonel Legge, as a proof that he had satisfactorily discharged the duties entrusted to him. When Hugh had received it, he bowed and left the room, saying that the man who was to supply his place had already arrived; and that he should return to Dunster as speedily as he could, to relieve the anxiety of those who were interested in the welfare of the travellers.

Hugh returned the bow, and in so courteous a manner, that the captain rose and followed his example. When the door was closed, he said to Hugh, "I see that you suspect, as I have long done, that our late guide is no ordinary trooper."

"I need not any longer disguise it from you," said Hugh, "our friend, for so I may term him, is Colonel Fettyplace, a gentleman possessed of large estates in this immediate neighbourhood, and of proved zeal in the royal cause."

"He was well disguised, then, for I fought under his command, and by his side, at the siege of Reading," said the captain, "and yet I knew him not."

"I recognised him the moment he spoke to me," said Hugh; "few men, whom I have once seen and conversed with, can deceive me by disguising themselves."

As he made this remark, a shadow was cast on the floor of the room; Hugh looked up to see what had caused it—and beheld a short, stout man, dressed as a cattle-drover, standing at the window, which opened into the garden.

"How now, friend? what would you with us, that you approach us thus clandestinely?"

"An it please your honour's greatness the new guide," said the man, removing a lock from a shock head of hair, and twirling it in his hand.

"If you squint so fearfully, you will not be able to guide us straight, my good-fellow the captain.

"Anan!" said the fellow, grinning and entering the room, "I be a little cross-eyed to be sure, but I were born zo, and zo be uzed to't like. Now, a-a-dry, I'll drink to your honour's health."

"Well, your modesty, as it appears, will keep your throat dry," said the captain, laughing, as he poured out a cup of wine and handed it to him.

"Lord love 'ee—never: so here's to the health of the colonel and the captain, wi' two pretty hard French names."

"You know us then, my friend," said the captain.

"Ees—that I does—and I knows some more too," said the fellow, winking; "I know that a madam wi' another hard French name can be guided by I—and the little Duke of York—ah! ah! ah!"

"I hope your discretion is as extensive as your knowledge," said Hugh, looking seriously.

"My knowledge is preety fair, zur, tho' I can't boast of knowing everybody, when they be disguised," said the man, laughing heartily.

"If this is meant for impertinence—quit the room, sirrah!" said Hugh, as he strode up to him, and was about to lay hands upon him to turn him out—but as he came close to him, he saw a small brilliant cross within the breast of his frock. 'Graveboys!' said Hugh, looking bewildered.

"Ay, or Walter Montagu, almoner to Queen Henrietta of England; but at present acting as guide, across the country to its western shores, to James, Duke of York, and his kind guardian, Marguerite de Brevis, and so successfully disguised it seems, that even he who is never deceived did not know him," said the new guide, in his natural voice.

"Walter Montagu, son of the Duke of Manchester, and brother to the Lord Mandeville or Kimbolton, the bitter puritan!" said Hugh.

"True—but a loyal subject, and moreover a priest of the only true church, and, be not alarmed at the information—an humble brother of the order of Jesus."

"And, as I can testify, the companion of the late master, his grace of Buckingham and of the late reign, when they visited the court of France to solicit Marie de Medicis for the hand of her daughter," said Hurstmonceaux.

"How was it then," asked Hugh, "that you wandering on foot through Somersetshire as a common quacksalver, attended by a man with a tin trumpet to announce your skill to the peasants?"

"Why am I now dressed as a horse-catcher and a cattle-driver?" said Montagu.

"I see it all," said Hugh, "and had I been as blind as the veriest mole that ever gnaws worms in the earth, I should have seen your character long since. And Jansons is he?"

"A gentleman of decayed fortune, but of an old family, who was my companion in my wild days when I excited the wrath of Prynne by my plays; and for the mere sport of the thing, I followed me in playing the mountebank at country revels. He followed with me to France, and to the court of his grace of Buckingham, and there, "

was induced to become a member of the Catholic church. He is not in holy orders, however, but is a lay member of the society of Jesus."

"Valentine Brooke, who, by his mad pranks among the court dames, incurred the severe displeasure of Marie of France," said Hurstmonçeau.

"The same," said Montagu, "but until we have accomplished our purpose of placing our charges beyond the reach of their enemies, you will be pleased to know him merely as my serving-man, and myself as John Brown, an experienced cattle-driver of Wiltshire."

"Pym and the parliament then seek to seize and secure the person of the Duke of York?" asked Hugh.

"The parliament, at the instigation of doctor Brent, had agreed with a party in Oxford, known by the name of the Gruellers, to carry off Prince James, that they might hold him until the king should have complied with their unjust demands. Their plan, however, was discovered, and is, I trust, frustrated," said Montagu.

"And did Pym lend himself to so vile a scheme to induce Charles Stuart to forget his

duty as a King, in his feelings as a father asked Hugh.

"I have been informed by one of my friends within this hour," replied Montagu, "that John Pym lies at Derby-house, so dangerously of a filthy and loathsome disorder, that his recovery is hourly expected. The public attribute his illness to grief brought on by the illness of his daughter Agatha; but I, to whom it was long ago foretold by one who reads the stars, believe it to be a mark of Heaven's displeasure on rebellion against the Lord's anointed. I warned him of this by a letter which I placed in the hands of Bachell. That letter was given to him, and he knows that, from the hour he received it, his power of mind deserted him."

"So may all the King's enemies perish," said Hurstmonceaux, crossing himself.

"Amen," said Montagu, solemnly.

"Nay, utter not such a prayer," said Montagu, "there is something horribly revolting in praying that God could slay myriads in fair fight, but to import pestilence on the half of this nation is more unchristian."

Hurstmonçeau was about to reply, but Montagu, changing his tone, and resuming the voice of a Wiltshire drover, said, "But come, your honours, 'tis time to mount the zaddle and zet out. We mun gang a good many miles ere zun goes down. I will order the nags to be got ready, and zee that the zoldier chaps be prepared."

"But our reckoning?" said Hurstmonçeau.

"Pish! man, they as travels wi' John Brown have nought to pay for victuals," said Montagu, adding in a whisper, "remember the journey from Dunster to Oxford with Master Langley,"

He then left the room through the window, and appeared again in a few minutes to say that the carriage was already in advance of them, and the troopers ready mounted.

They followed him to the door, and found Alick Pearson standing there with their horses ready for them to mount, and the dragoons in their saddles.

CHAPTER XVI.

HUGH de Mohun, when he had seen the set out on their march, under the command of Hurstmonceaux, who, now that he knew the importance of those whom they had in charge, was doubly vigilant, rode forward, and, passing by the carriage, gained the side of Montagu. Just as we shall still call him, smiled and nodded, he dropped behind to make room for Hugh to pass by the side of his master. He was admirably disguised, and had not Hugh been let into the secret, he would not have discovered in the red-robed lad, clad in a frock and large calf-skin boots, a rough broad-brimmed felt hat on his head, and a huge whip in his hand, the sleek solemn follower of an itinerant mediciner. Both

and man, as they professed to be, rode powerful, muscular horses; but the one on which the master rode was better groomed and accoutred than that on which his serving-man was mounted, and their harnesses though nearly alike, were sufficiently different in shape and material to make any one sensible of the relative positions they held to each other.

Montagu pushed across a flat country, at as rapid a pace as the carriage could follow him, and led the way through the village of Childry towards Kingston Lisle; thence, leaving the road which leads to Swindon, he turned short to the left, and came to a small public-house, known by the sign of 'The Blowing Stone;' and so called from a huge perforated pebble, which stood at its door; which was found upon the downs, and when blown into by any one accustomed to so rude a wind instrument, gave forth a note like the roaring of a bull, that might be heard for some miles around it.

A relay of horses there awaited them to drag the carriage up the steep ascent, which was accomplished with some difficulty, and no little uneasiness to the occupants of the vehicle. When they

reached the summit, the prospect that but their view was one of the finest that England

"Let your men halt awhile," said Montagu, "breathe their horses, and do you ride on with a foot-pace, to yon clump of stones."

Hugh ordered the dragoons to dismount and followed Montagu to the spot which he had pointed out to him.

"Should your horse require shoeing, your smith at hand to do the job," said Montagu, smiling.

"I see no smithy, nor any house within this wood," replied Hugh.

"Yet this was the abode of Wayland, the smith whom the country people believe to be still alive, and even now that they still hear the sound of his hammer upon his anvil. I did not bring you here, however, in hopes of hearing him at work, but to communicate to you certain matters which I intended for your ears alone; dismount and let your horse to browse on the grass which has long smothered the smith's cave, which was once the burying-place of some Danish or chief."

Hugh dismounted and fastened his horse to a thorn-bush which grew beside the flat stone that covered what is called Wayland Smith's cave.

"Look around you, De Mohun," said Montagu ;
"saw you ever a more glorious view?"

"Never" said Hugh, "have I seen one more extensive, but the absence of running streams and the broad ocean leads me to prefer the Tors of Somerset."

"Extensive as it is, in my zeal for the royal cause, I have travelled so often on foot over the ground you see around you, that I could find my way from town to town in the darkest night that ever obscured the stars: but I will not talk of myself. I have been in Normandy, lately, on a mission of importance. At Rouen, I met with one who is deeply interested in your welfare, and who bade me ask if you had availed yourself of, and profited by, certain books and other things, which he left behind him for your use and edification."

"You must allude to my kind friend and tutor, Gilbert Dynes," said Hugh.

"I do," said Montagu.

"Tell me of his present abode and occupation," said Hugh.

"He is now a member of the church of St. Dunstons and a brother of the society of which I am a worthy member. He hoped that his perusal of certain works, which he left behind when he quitted Oxford with brother I might be prepared by this to declare himself a convert to the doctrines of the church of Rome."

Hugh shook his head.

"Enough," said Montagu, "I told brother Master Robert Snelling had done his duty faithfully by his ward and those who had committed him to his care, to allow his mind to be carried aside easily from the faith in which he was brought up."

"You did him no more than justice in saying," replied Hugh, "I grieve to think that a worthy man as Gilbert Dynes should have deserted the standard under which he fought so bravely."

"We will not discuss a theological question now," said Montagu. "Time is short, and I do not know if Hugh de Mohun has discovered

that may tend to reveal the mystery that impends over his birth."

"Nothing," said Hugh, and he sighed deeply as he said so.

"I should be unwilling to raise hopes that I may not be able to establish:" said Montagu, taking Hugh by the hand and pressing it, "but I have obtained information, that I think may lead to the discovery of further papers, which belonged to Master Snelling, or rather to him who assumed that name."

Hugh gazed so inquiringly into Montagu's face that he replied to his looks.

"I knew not, myself, until I visited Gilbert Dynes in the monastery of St. Ouen, that he whom we called Snelling was his elder brother, but by a different mother: they were separated, it appears for many years, through the caprice of the step-mother, but secretly corresponded with each other, under a pledge that the younger, Gilbert, should not disclose the name assumed by the elder, for a purpose which hereafter may be revealed."

"These be news, indeed;" said Hugh, "and where may we hope to find the papers of which you speak?"

"We must search for them in the morning room at Dunster, unless we can prevail on Chipera to come to our aid: I think I have a thread in my hand, and leave it to me to follow the clue," said Montagu, "but enough, I must press on."

"Answer me but one question more and I will proceed," said Hugh.

Montagu stood beside his horse, which was about to mount, and bade him ask it.

"I would know why you have felt ever since we met, and continue still to feel an interest in my fortunes," said Hugh.

"I might flatter you by saying, that your noble mien and your manly conduct at Culbock, and your bravery in rescuing Mistress Everard from the waves of the Hone river, made a deep impression upon me;" said Montagu, smiling, "but I will speak the truth—if you think a Jesuit capable of speaking the truth—and tell you, that when first we met at Porlock-weir, your extraordinary resemblance to one I had known in my early years made me anxious to discover who and what you were. I did so, and add, without meaning to flatter you, for I

seek to convert you to our faith—that, since I have known you, your virtues have confirmed the favourable impression which your appearance made upon me. It may be too, that the cruel conduct of Julian Baskell towards you bespoke my further favour.”

“I thank you,” said Hugh, “sincerely thank you. May I ask to whom I bear so remarkable a likeness as to have attracted your notice.”

“It were better not to tell you, at present, at least; lest I should raise false hopes,” said Montagu.

“It is strange,” said Hugh; “but the King and Hurstmonceaux thought that I resembled—”

“Whom?” asked Montagu earnestly.

“Some one whom they had known in earlier days,” said Hugh.

“Well; mount and follow me; for I see the carriage in motion, and they will need me to put them into the right track,” said Montagu, as he rode forth from the cave, and waved to the driver to enter upon a broad, open turf road, divided from the downs on either side by artificial banks.

“This road,” said he, “is called the Ridgeway, and is said to have been formed by the Romans,

and to have extended from the city of Bristol to the town of Lynn in Norfolk; below us to-day lies a field called the Seven Barrows, where the Saxons who fell in the great battle of the Marston, under the command of King Alfred, against the Danes, are supposed to lie buried. Behind us you will see the town of Wantage, in which that wise and brave monarch was born—it lies immediately opposite the square-towered church of Letcombe Regis, and you may discern amidst the elm trees of the valley; ride on, Hugh, for you cannot miss the way. I will go to the rear to see that the dogs do not loiter."

Hugh rode on in deep thought, for the words he had heard from Walter Montagu were so strange a nature as to give food for much meditation and reflection. After a few minutes, he turned in the saddle to see if his companion was still riding. He saw him riding by the side of the man on the monçeau, and seemingly in close conversation with him: of the nature of their converse Hugh could not doubt, and hope beamed more brightly in his eyes than it had done since the death of Robert of Normandy, whom he now for the first time knew to be Robert Dynes.

Thinking of the establishment of his name and family and of presenting himself before Prudence Everard, freed from the mystery which had hitherto enveloped him he rode on until he came to the summit of a steep, and as he deemed it, dangerous descent. Montagu was speedily at his side, and told him that they were passing over the White Horse, an immense figure cut through the green turf into the stratum of chalk below, and meant to represent the galloping steed—the emblem of the Saxon standard.

The carriage descended the hill in safety, but not without causing so much alarm to its occupants that the screams of females were distinctly heard at intervals. Hugh suggested the propriety of their walking down the perilous steep, but Montagu would not hear of it.

It was high noon when, leaving the Ridgeway and turning to the left, they arrived at a solitary mansion, seated in a deep dell, and surrounded with extensive coppices of nut-wood. A broad glade between magnificent oak trees gave them access to it, and, as soon as the carriage had entered its courtyard the gates were closed.

Montagu and his seeming servant had entered

with it, and Hugh de Mohun could only re-
a shrug of his shoulders to Hurstmonceaux'
tion of where they were to find proven
themselves and their horses.

The question, however, was answered
factorily by a man who bade them follow h
large barn, which stood in a meadow behi
mansion, where they found an excellent
prepared for themselves, and plenty of co
water for their horses.

Heated and tired as he was, the captain was
tious in his libations to Bacchus, that Hugh
not help commenting upon his abstemiousne

"I have heard that to day that mal
thoughtful, Master Hugh; and I mean not
dulge so freely as, and I confess it, has be
wont, until I have unravelled a mystery t
present bewilders me," said the captain.

"Walter Montagu—or John Brown—
ought to call him—has communicated eith
much or too little," said Hugh.

"I would that I could get speech of the
who has Prince James in charge," said th
tain; "if at least she be the same who
dragged from her bed in Merton College."

“ And what would you with her ? What do you know of Mademoiselle De Brevis ? ” asked Hugh.

“ Of a De Brevis—except a worthy gentleman who came from the court of France as an ambassador or royal messenger, or in some such office, I know nothing ; but, an I am not greatly deceived by the passage of time, that lady’s voice has been heard by me before, though it professed to belong to one who bore a different name. I would that I could even get a peep at her, to see if her features make the same impression upon me as her voice did,” said the captain.

“ It is impossible,” replied Hugh, “ she will not allow herself to be seen or spoken to until she has safely discharged the duties entrusted to her.”

“ Tell me not of impossibilities. The carriage may be upset in descending one of those wild hills we see before us, and I could almost hope that such an accident might happen,” said the captain. “ But I will not resort to the wine-cup, except for the purpose of refection, until I have solved certain doubts that crowd my brain.”

“ Heard you ever of one who bore the name of Robert Dynes ? ” asked Hugh.

“ Question me no further at present, De Mohun,

and rest assured that I will leave nothing to probe the mystery to the quick. I will follow the example of our men, and seek hours' rest."

So saying, Hurstmonçeau threw himself on the floor of the barn, and was soon in a deep sleep. Hugh could not sleep, but he laid himself down by his friend's side, and remained in deep anxious thought until the sun was low in the heavens.

Jansen then came to tell him that the party had set out. The troopers were roused from their slumbers, and fell into their places in the ranks under the command of Hurstmonçeau. They rode forward, and gained the side of Marlborough, with whom he conversed on indifferent terms. After a pleasant ride in the refreshment of the evening, they came to a mansion in the town of Marlborough, where accommodation was afforded them for passing the night in comfort.

In this manner they journeyed, without anything occurring to alarm them for the safety of their charges, for four days. On the evening of the fifth day, as they were pressing on towards Wiveliscombe Barrow towards Luxborough,

Montagu intended resting for the night at the house of Colonel Wyndham, for their horses were well-nigh worn out with toiling over the hills, Hugh suddenly drew his bridle, and called his companion's attention to the figures of two men, who appeared to be observing their movements from the side of a high and thickly-wooded bank that impended over a part of the road before them.

"Do you remain here," said Hugh, "while I ride forward and question those men. The report of my pistol shall be a signal to you of danger at hand."

Hugh put his horse at the bank, and in a few bounds was by the side of those who had roused his suspicions. They were dressed as countrymen, and held each of them a rough Exmoor-forest pony by the bridle.

"You are out late, my men," said Hugh. "It is already growing dark."

"Not so dark as to hide us from the vigilant eyes of Colonel Hugh de Mohun it seems," said one, laughing.

"Giles Tudball!" said Hugh.

"Ay, and worthy Robert Quirke. We are here

to warn you not to approach Luxborough, conduct you by a private path to Dunster Master Luttrell, Colonel Wyndham, and be, others also, anxiously expect you. written orders for your guide, so lead us him."

Hugh leapt his horse into the road, and to Montagu to come towards him. G Robert Quirke left their hiding-place, and Montagu reached them, the former gave note from Colonel Wyndham.

By the little light that remained, I contrived to learn that it was not safe for go to Luxborough, and that he was to trust self and those whom he had in charge guidance of the bearer of the note.

"It is well," said Montagu, "lead on Giles stared when he heard Montagu's voice after a few seconds, placed his hand upon his and whispered, "*You* require no guide in parts—but I have undertaken the duty, discharge it."

"Enough, lead on in silence," said Montagu pressing the hand that rested on his knee.

CHAPTER XVII.

IT was early in the afternoon of the same day, in the evening of which Giles Tudball met Montagu, and prevented his going on to Luxborough, that Master Jenkins, the captain of the *St. David* of Cardiff, stood smoking his pipe, as he leant over the low wall of the pier at Minehead, and conversed, or rather chatted, between the puffs of Virginia, with his mate's wife—Mabel—once the waiting-maid at the *Ship Aground*.

Mabel was playing with a little urchin who could just contrive to toddle along the deck of the vessel, which was moored close to the pier-head, and within a few yards of the hostelry, where, but two short years before, she had incurred the anger of the deceased harbour-master, for neglecting

him and her work to flirt with her lover, no husband.

"You must bring little Taff ashore, I said Jenkins, as he turned away to get himself replenished, or to take a glass of grog. "As the tide ebbs, the St. David must be hauled into deep water."

"Are we going across to-night, sir?" Mabel.

"*You* are not going across; but it is I that *I* may have to put to sea; so bring you ashore along with the youngster. Master I has sent to order the cutter to be ready to start at sea at a moment's notice."

Mabel, to whom such sudden movements were now familiar, dived into the fore-cabin with the infant, and soon appeared again, with her linen of clothes, and stepped ashore, by means of a plank that reached from the deck of the St. David to the pier-wall. She was about to follow Jenkins into the Ship Aground, when her attention was drawn to the clattering of the feet of the ponies, shuffling along the hard road through the lower town of Minehead towards the quay.

"Who be these, I wonder?" said she, touching the Welshman's arm. "Here come a little man wrapped up in a long black cloak, as if it were mid-winter, and a woman, who is veiled as closely as if she feared that this burning sun would injure her complexion."

"They both look as though they were returning from a funeral," said Jenkins: "but stop; the little man is beckoning to me: let us hear what he wants."

"We have ridden far and fast," said the little man, from between the collar of his cloak, which almost covered his face. "We would leave our ponies here, and be carried to Porlock-weir by water."

"I feel faint and ill," said his companion, "furnish us with a boat, good sailor-man, and you shall be well paid for your time and trouble."

"Hast ridden far, madam?" asked Mabel.

"From Bridgewater only on horseback; but we have travelled for two days and nights, and I am completely worn out," replied the female.

"Dismount and go within. Mistress Luckes will give you access to her sleeping-room, where

you may rest and refresh yourself, while I procure you a boat—for mine own cannot be ed,” said Jenkins, as he helped her to dismount.

“Delay not, my good friend, and I will reward the man liberally who shall set me ashore without wear of Porlock,” said the little man, as he dismounted his pony and followed Jenkins, who led the lady, on which the lady had ridden, into the stables at the rear of the house.

“Within, there are Will Bowering and his way, the big butcher, who was thought to be dead at Cutcombe, but is recovered of his wounds as tide will serve, and they have nothing else to do. I doubt not that they will row you round the coast. Your offer of reward be liberal enough: I will be me within, sir.”

The man obeyed; but, as it appeared to him, very reluctantly. In the parlour sat the two Tudball, with Master Robert Quirke; both smoking, and had a cool tankard of cider between them. At another table sat Alloway, the wretch still bearing the marks of his wounds, listening to Will Bowering’s marvellous tales, and smoking and drinking fast and furiously.

"Put down your pipes, finish your liquors, and earn an honest penny. Here is a gentleman who hath a maiden in tow, who would save a ride over the hills, by being conveyed to Porlock-wear in a boat," said Jenkins.

"I have no boat of my own; but if Master Tudball will lend me a skiff, and Alloway will lend a hand, I have no objection to the trip, provided the gentleman will pay us liberally," said Will.

"I will give a gold Jacobus to be divided between you," said the little gentleman.

"Say a Jacobus each, and as soon as the tide turns, we will start, and in less than two hours land you safe at the wear," said Alloway.

"I will give you the two coins, though it is paying somewhat exorbitantly," replied the gentleman.

Will and Alloway finished the can of spirits before them, and left the house, to get the skiff in readiness, well knowing that Giles Tudball would not refuse the loan of it.

"Would it please you, sir, to lay down your valise, rid yourself of that cumbrous cloak, which

is over-burthensome for a summer's noon take a draft of this cold cup," said Giles Tu

"I thank thee friend in all sincerity, but do neither the one nor the other," replied th

"It containeth but small cider," said C holding the tankard towards him, "and is r ing, without being intoxicating."

"In all sincerity I thank thee, but I w drink, save of the pure element."

"Master Robert Browne hath not forgott draughts he took, when somewhat travel-wea the Luttrell Arms at Dunster," said Giles.

The little man fidgeted in his seat, and away his face.

"Tush! man, I knew your voice the m you opened your lips," said Giles; "but b afraid—you shall leave this place unharme be landed at the Wear, to visit Master Bachell, as securely as though you were no pu but a most loyal subject. Come, off with and hat, for you are well-nigh suffocated wit heat, and fearlessly join us in a cool tankard, I will pledge you my word shall contain n but the thinnest cider our host's cellars can furn

The preacher hesitated for a moment, but, overcome by the oppressive heat and the fears to which the discovery of his person gave rise, he let fall the heavy cloak in which he was enveloped, and appeared in a new suit of the deepest mourning. He did not refuse the cup which Robert Quirke placed in his hand, but drank of the contents very moderately.

"It will not hurt thee, man, drink again: no! well never mind; you will doubtless fare better when you have the free run of the cellars at Ashley-Combe," said Giles. "But what news bear you? bad I fear; if I may judge by your dress you have lost a friend, and Charles Stuart—God bless him!—a bitter enemy. We have heard of Master John Pym's indisposition."

"How long?—how long?" groaned the preacher.

"He is dead, then!" said Quirke, "and you bear the tidings to him who was to have wedded his daughter."

"Too true—too true—my kind friend is dead," said Browne, and he placed his head between his hands and wept bitterly.

Both Giles Tudball and Quirke saw that

Browne's grief was sincere, and respecting his things, made an excuse, to leave him to himself withdrawing and taking Jenkins with them.

"There is one above would speak to you Mabel, as we shall still call her, to Giles T
"follow me."

Giles went upstairs, and was ushered into a room, where, to his great surprise, he found a female, closely veiled, awaiting him.

"I was fearful of not being able to speak to you alone, Giles, and I must be quick in what I have to tell you: Master Pym is dead, and I have obtained leave to visit my friends in the West, under the protection of the chaplain, Master Bachell, who has been deputed by Mistress Pym to communicate the news of her husband's death, and the continued illness of her daughter Agatha, to you. Bachell: but of private matters, enough: listen to me, and ask me not how I learn these news. The Prince James, Duke of York, thitherward, escorted, among others, by Hugh Mohun, and—and Alick Pearson. A plan has been laid to surprise them this night, near to Luxborough. Be it your duty to mar the

nd save the prince from danger and Hugh de Iohun from disgrace."

"Janet Hodge, I thank you. I cannot doubt our word, and so soon as I shall have seen you float, and on your way to your fatherless home, will take such steps to save the prince as shall provide for his safety, without involving you or any one else in trouble."

"Now leave me, Giles; but should you see Pearson, tell him that I am true to the good old cause, and to—"

"Him—you would say; it shall be done."

Janet pressed Giles's hand, and he left her to see the skiff made ready: when it was brought alongside the pier, he placed her and the preacher in their seats, and gave strict orders to Will and his companion to land them speedily and safely at the Wear.

"And now, Master Quirke, let us to Dunster castle with all convenient speed. I will explain to you the motive of my sudden movement as we go along. We will to my paddock and saddle a couple of foresters, for we may have to ride far and fast, ere the day is ended," said Giles, as he strode

towards the marshes, on the borders of which tanyard and dwelling-house were situated.

"Where now, I wonder?" said Dame Tu in angry tones, as she saw Quirke and her husband saddling the ponies.

"On state business, dame," said Quirke.

"We are for the Castle," said Giles; "and I threaten one whom you once regarded with unfavourable eyes. Hugh de Mohun travels homeward, and his life is at stake."

"If you speak the truth—but I fear more than you do but laugh at me, and mean but to smother me—clink the cans at the Luttrell Arms—use no force for Hugh was a goodly youth, and hath fought bravely for the King. You may tell him I will have his sea-suit in safe keeping," said the dame as her husband rode into the meadow, at the end of his paddock, and avoiding the middle town of the village of Alcombe, made straight for Dunster.

The Castle was rigidly guarded, for information had reached Colonel Wyndham, that large bodies of men had arrived from different points, and were quartered about Ashley-Combe. The gatehouse which had been occupied as a dwelling by the

Robert Snelling, Hugh de Mohun and Basil Chipera, was now used as a guard-room, and its turrets were furnished with cannon, commanding the steep approach that led to it.

Giles Tudball and Robert Quirke had been employed so frequently by the colonel, that the sentinels had orders to admit them whenever they wished to see him. The gate, therefore, was thrown open to them as soon as they presented themselves before it. Basil Chipera, who had resigned the wardenship, and devoted himself exclusively to the cultivation of his lemons and myrtles, and to playing with the little Alice and William Luttrell; took their ponies and stabled them, and then led them round to the southern side of the Castle, and ushered them into the library by the postern door.

Giles Tudball found the colonel and the owner of the castle reading a letter to the ladies. He was about to withdraw, but Master Luttrell beckoned to him to come forward.

"What news, Giles?" asked Master Luttrell.

"I have a word or two for your private ear, sir," replied Giles

"Speak them out, man; be not afraid,"
colonel.

Giles looked at the ladies, and hesitated.

"Speak out, Giles, I say; and speak bo

"Hugh de Mohun travels hitherward ar

"Tush! man, we know it—sent we not
Jenkins, to have the St. David in readines
to sea?" said Master Luttrell.

"And you konw, perhaps, sir, that his
of bringing the prince hither is discover
likely to be frustrated. If so, my zeal
stripped my discretion," said Giles.

"You cannot mean it!" said the colonel.

"An attack is to be made upon them, at
to Luxborough," said Giles.

"It is impossible that your news can be
said Prudence Everard, starting up, "if a
the writer of the letter, which colonel Wy
has just read to us can be depended upon."

"He never deceived me yet," said the c
"but let us hear from what source, Giles ob
his information."

Tudball told his tale as briefly as he could.

"Nay, if Master Browne is on his road to

Bachell, rely upon it that Janet hath good grounds for giving you the information which she hath done," said Master Luttell.

"What is to be done?" said the ladies.

"If, as I suspect, the preacher carries secret orders to Master Bachell, to put himself at the head of those who are to attack the party in attendance on the prince and seize his person, we have plenty of time to warn them to avoid Luxborough, and bring them to the Castle by another route," said Giles.

"My information tells me, that they will not halt at Luxborough, if their horses are able to bring them on hither," said the colonel.

"Had you not better send a strong body of men to guard Luxborough?" said Prudence, in a whisper to the colonel.

"And so weaken our garrison, that if it be attacked we shall not be able to defend it?—no, no; that will never do," he replied.

"What then is to be done?" said Prudence, wringing her hands in despair. "The prince will be seized, and his guards slain or taken prisoners."

"Leave it to me," said Giles, "and I will, in company with Master Quirke, go to Luxborough,

in a sufficient disguise to escape notice. warn Colonel Wyndham's tenantry—"

"That I can do in person, Giles; for all capable of bearing arms are within this Castle," said the colonel.

"We will on then, and meet the party they approach Luxborough. My knowledge of the country will enable me to conduct them by the most difficult, but private roads; rely upon it, my friends, at the very latest, shall see them all safe within these walls."

"I will give you a note to the leader of the party," said the colonel, "and then use your ingenuity to reach the spot where you intend to meet them."

Giles and Quirke furnished themselves with disguises, while the note was being penned, and soon as it was written, they mounted their horses, and, as we have seen, fulfilled their mission.

We must leave the Castle, for a time, and go to see how those whose loyal hearts were beating anxiously for the fate of their friends, and follow Master E and Janet Hodge to Ashley-Combe, where the events which happened that must be recorded in another chapter.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE tide was in their favour, and, in a very short time, Will Bowering and his mate Alloway landed their passengers at the wear of Porlock, and received their gold jacobuses.

"A pretty fair day's work," said Alloway, as he tossed up the coin that had been put into his palm, "let us to the Blue Anchor and get a can of liquor and change for this gold piece."

"Not I," said Will, "I promised Giles Tudball not to go ashore; and, having landed our precious cargo, a puritan parson and a lively waiting-maid—we will back to Minyead as quickly as we can."

"Let us hail the house at any rate and take something aboard to lighten our pull against tide," said Alloway.

"No—I will be master for once: you shall not taste bit or sup until we are alongside the pier of

Minyead—so push off and pull hard, for I t
our services may be required on shore,” s

Alloway reluctantly obeyed, and, as h
asked Will if he knew the names of the p
whom they had just landed.

“ I should be blind an I did not know
Robert Browne, the preacher, as he is ten
as to his companion a man must be an a
recognise Janet Hodge, the daughter of
gatekeeper, at the lodge of Ashley-Cor
hath once set eyes on her fair face ; had
single man and unsuited with a spou
Pearson should not have carried off so
wench without having a rival to dispute
for her affections.”

“ What can they be doing at the lo
why did Master Tudball forward them
voyage thither ?” said Alloway.

“ Of his motives for acting as he has do
not speak,” said Will ; “ but rely upon
done all for the best. He bade me see
know either of them, and to hold no con
them on their way—but, come, pull away
us to Minyead again as soon as may be—
not to be in the Channel in the dark.”

"For fear of the grey woman?" asked Alloway.

"You may laugh, as other fools have done, at my dread of old Mother Lecky, but as true as there is a God above us, I heard her voice last night announcing woe to the Luttrells of Dunster," said Will—"so pull, and pull like a man, our services may be needed."

"Tell me your tale, Will, for I know you have something to disclose, and I promise you to put forth all my strength," said Alloway.

"Listen then, as you pull along in the slack of the tide," said Will, "but do not laugh at what I am about to reveal to you—for no other mortal hath ever heard my strange adventure."

Alloway assured his companion that he would not even smile at the recital he was about to hear.

"You must know then, that, only last night, as I lay on board the Blossom of Minyeard waiting for the tide to lift her into port, I heard a voice—a voice that I have often heard before—chanting to a melancholy tune, these verses—I shall never forget them, for terror has engraven them deeply on my memory," said Will in a whisper.

"Courage, man! It is broad daylight—speak out boldly, for it is well known that the grey old

b— never travels but by dark or moonlight Alloway.

“Whisht!” said Will, “I heard the sound of wings even then—as you spoke.”

“Of course you did; for a flock of seamen the sands and fluttered over us as if to examine and see who we were that had dared to meet them at their meal: but the verses, my verses,” said the butcher.

“Thus they ran,” said Will, shuddering at all the winds of heaven seemed to whistle inharmonious accompaniment to them:—

“Leave thy light bark to the buoyant wave,
Her anchor will hold her fast;
Your aid may be needed a friend to save
Ere another day's space be past.
So away to the tower,
Away to the keep,
Ere the Luttrells of Dunster have cause to weep
For the loss of one,
Their sovereign's son,
Who flies from his foes to the ocean deep.”

“Well, curses on the old woman!” said Will, way, “if that be all she said—she might have spoken out more plainly if there was any sense in her speech.”

“Nay, curse her not, but pull away men

shall to Dunster Castle, as soon as we reach our port," said Will.

"And I will with you, if it be but to laugh at your folly in listening to old Mother Lecky, or rather, your own voice in a dream," said Alloway.

A three hours' pull brought them to the quay of Minehead, where we will leave them, to follow Master Browne and Janet to Ashley-Combe.

"Come on, Janet, forward, girl! why stand you loitering about the gate-lodge, and peeping and prying into the coppice behind it, as though you dreaded a ghost," said Master Browne.

"Here dwelt my poor old father, and here passed I most of my happiest days," said the girl; "in yonder thick grove of hazels did I plight my troth to him who has cast me aside as a worthless thing, because I left him to follow one who derived the support of his infancy from the same source that nourished me; but on, sir, I will not give way to these foolish feelings any longer."

"I would expound to thee maiden, the vanity of such frailties, did time allow of it, but we must press on and deliver our tidings to the master of this fair domain. I marvel that the gate-lodge is

left thus unguarded," said Browne, as he thrust the gate open with a thrust of his foot.

"Stand, strangers," said a tall trooper, presenting himself to their view, "the way is open to you pass."

"I know it not. I am from London, and I have dispatches from the parliament to Master Bachell."

"Give them to me, and do you and the man that bears you company, seek a room in the Anchor below, whither an answer, if one be needed necessary, shall be conveyed to you," said the trooper.

"I deliver my dispatches into no other hands but those of Master Bachell," said Browne.

"Then you may wait here until he pass by, for I shall not permit thee to advance further," said the man, planting his pike in the ground. The preacher, who rebuked him severely for his insolence, and told him who he was.

"I care not if you be twenty Pym's children. I have orders to admit no one without a pass, and on those orders I shall act," replied the man.

"You do right, Reeves; but I will admit all good folks on my own responsibility," said

man, clad in a closely-fitting suit of grey cloth, with breast-plate, back-piece and helmet of polished steel.

"Roger Priver, I bid thee take me to your master," said Robert Browne.

"Master me no masters here, sir; but if you would have speech of my worthy friend, Julian Bachell, follow me, and I will intercede with him in thy behalf: but let me advise thee of one thing—he loveth not to have his ears wearied with long and tedious discourses, such as you were wont to inflict upon the household of your master, John Pym," said Priver, thus, as he thought, repaying Browne for the tedious harangues, which he had been in the habit of dealing out to the household at Derby-house.

"How long? how long?" groaned the preacher.

"And what would'st *thou* here, wench? asked Priver, turning to Janet. "Thy sweetheart, as the ungodly term it, dwelleth in the tents of unrighteousness."

"I would speak with my foster-brother, your master; so lead on, sir, or dread his displeasure," said Janet.

"Ahumph!" replied Priver, "Master Bachell hath employments—"

"And so hath Master Priver," said Julian stepped forth from the shrubbery into the "and it better befits him to attend to the to insult a preacher of the gospel and a maiden. In, sir, and see that preparations be for the reception of these my friends."

"Ahumph!" said Priver, as he cast a deep disgust at Browne and Janet, and towards the house.

Julian spoke a few words of ordinary courtesy to Browne and Janet, and then led the way in to the hall door, where two men dressed in livery of the Bachells, received him.

"Let refreshments be served in my room," he said, as he passed them.

The men bowed, and one of them went in the direction of the kitchen, while the other, previous to his master, turned down a passage past the dining-hall, and threw open a door which gave them admittance to the private apartments of the justice-room of the elder Bachell.

As Janet passed the great dining-hall, she saw that it was filled with armed men, who were waiting for the meal which answers to the modern tea-dinner but was then called a *bever*, and consisted

merely a manchet of bread and a draught from a jack of mild ale.

When Julian had seated himself, and the door was closed, he asked Browne and Janet, if they brought him any tidings of import.

The preacher begged that Janet might be heard and dismissed, as he had a message to deliver which required that no one but himself should hear it.

Janet took the hint, and, delivering a small packet, which had been entrusted to her by Mistress Pym, watched earnestly to observe what effect the perusal of it would have upon her foster-brother.

Julian read it, and, tossing it from him, bade her seek the housekeeper's room, and obtain what refreshments she needed after her tedious journey.

"Now, may God forgive him, for I cannot," said Janet, as 'she closed the door upon herself, "he hath no more feeling for the poor girl, who is dying for the love of him, than the butcher hath for the lamb that he slayeth for his profit. Had he shown but one spark of tenderness, had he shed but one tear on reading the appeal of Agatha's mother for her dying child, I could have forgiven him—but, though the same breasts nurtured us both—I cast him off, and for ever. I will avail

myself of my knowledge of this house, and what treason he and the preacher are hatching.

Janet from her infancy had known every part of the lodge. Instead of seeking the housekeeper's room, which was nigh to the offices of the servants, she passed round by a dark and somewhat intricate passage to an apartment that joined a room in which Julian Bachell and Browne were seated, and which had been used by his father during the days of his widowhood as a sleeping chamber. She entered it cautiously, and applied herself to the door of communication between the two rooms. Although the preacher and Julian spoke in a low tone, their words reached her ears, and when they had finished speaking, and the servant who brought the refreshments that had been ordered entered the room, she left her hiding-place, and retreated as silently as she had gained it.

"That plan is already frustrated, if Giles' words shall be but true to his word; and if my conjectures fail me not, Master Julian's plan shall be equally unsuccessful."

So saying, the girl left the lodge by a side door, and plunged into the deep woods that surrounded the back offices. A few active

enabled her to gain the top of the hill, and a quarter of an hour's rapid walking brought her to the door of a keeper's cottage, the occupier of which knew her well, and was distantly related to her. It was not her intention, however, to make herself known to him or to converse with him, for she knew not how he might stand affected among the changes in men's feelings that were daily taking place. She did not, therefore, enter the cottage, but went to the rear of it, and selecting a strong pony out of some three or four that stood there, put a bridle in its mouth, and, springing on its unsaddled back, rode off through the woods towards Dunster as fast as the entangled brush-wood would allow of her going.

Within an hour after her departure, a strong body of men, headed by Roger Priver, were drawn up in the court-yard of Ashley-Combe. They were well mounted and well armed, and many among them were, evidently, men who had seen some service.

A groom held a horse fully accoutred for the field, and a pony was brought out by another servant, just as Julian Bachell, completely armed, and the preacher, made their appearance at the hall

door. Julian sprang facing the troopers, and they, in which he succeeded in seizing the occupants safely and would not only receive their payment, but be liberated.

"As to those who resist on their own discretion, given that they are resisted, and we will do—you may smite them. Should they yield—but not let one of them follow. Master Brown led the rear, with Roger himself of your protection."

Julian led the vanguard, and the troopers impended over the roads, pushed along the country would permit. The troopers followed only broken by the Master Browne, with friendly argument, their tones and by the

It was nearly nine at night when they reached the edge of the wood that overlooked Colonel Wyndham's house. There Julian halted his men, while he rode forward to reconnoitre. He returned in a few minutes and summoned the preacher to his side. They rode apart from the rest, and Julian told Browne that no lights were to be seen about the house, and that it appeared to be deserted.

"They are not yet arrived," said Browne. "It would be as well to intercept them, before they are ensconced within these strong walls."

"It is well conceived. We will on towards Wiveliscombe Barrow, and conceal ourselves within the woods that overhang the roads that lead hither. Forward, my men," said Julian. "Priver, do you ride in advance, for to you every foot of the ground is familiar, and lead us towards Wiveliscombe Barrow."

"I hope that I am to go alone," said Priver. "I am not willing that my ears should be filled with the ravings of a mad preacher."

Browne was about to make an indignant reply to this insulting observation; but Julian bade him be silent, and reserve his rebukes for a more fitting opportunity.

The point which they aimed at was gained :

The men were cautiously concealed with coppices, which skirted the road on either side, but, although they waited until the night grew apace, the object of their watch was not discovered.

"Can they have taken another road?" said Julian.

"Here is one that may answer that question," said Priver, approaching and dragging a country-fellow by the collar of his coat.

"He tells me that a carriage, the curtains of which were closely drawn round it, was conveyed by two men, whom he knew, in spite of disguise, to be Giles Tudball and Robert Coker of Minehead, through the woods below us to the park of Dunster. It was followed, as he says, by a score of troopers, some two or three gentlemen, and two serving-men."

"Is this true, fellow?" said Julian, leveling his pistol at the man's head.

"As true as that I am standing here," said the man.

"Then, now for my other plan—for I will take Dunster Castle, gentlemen; and knighthood for him who first puts foot within its walls."

CHAPTER XIX.

"I MARVEL greatly," said Basil Chipera, as he sat beside old Jefferies, in the butler's pantry, "I marvel greatly, that our expected guests delay so long. The night is far advanced, and the moon will shortly be down."

"The roads are bad, and the hills steep and dangerous for wheeled vehicles," replied Jefferies, "I trust, however, that they will be speedily here; for our folks above stairs are so anxious for their safety, that they can neither eat nor drink; the supper remains untouched, and no sound is heard among them above a whisper, except it be the heavy sighing of Mistress Prudence Everard."

"Hist—silence!" said Basil, "I hear the sound of a horse's tread: I will out and listen."

"And I will with you," said Jefferies, as he followed Basil into the court-yard.

"Whoever it is, he hath already reached the outer gate, and is doubtless demanding admittance. Let us on, Jefferies, and learn what tidings the rider brings?"

They went to the gate just as the officer in charge of it had ordered it to be thrown open.

"It is a woman, as I live, and alone, Jefferies."

"Hamnet Hele," said the officer on duty, standing at the door of the guard-room, "here is a girl who hath ridden hither from Ashley-Combe, and she hath to have instant speech with the colonel."

"Her name?" said the old soldier, stepping into the court-yard.

"My name cannot concern you—you are not afraid that one, and she a woman, is come to the Castle," said the girl.

"Nevertheless, I must know your name before I report your wish to the colonel," said Hamnet.

"I am called Janet Hodge, and my father was

"Gate-keeper of Ashley-Combe. I knew him well for a good man and true, and grieved when that his only child should have broken the heart of an honest lad, called Pearson, by taking service with the family of a rebel," said Jefferies.

"Talk not of these matters now," said Janet, as she sprung from her pony, "but, if you have any regard for the welfare of this family, lead me at once to Master Luttrell or Colonel Wyndham."

"I will do so upon my own responsibility—that is with Hamnet Hele's permission—" said Basil Chipera.

"Do so," said Hamnet; "there is an earnestness in her manner, that leads me to believe she is sincere, and it was ever a practice with that great man, Gustavus Adolphus, to—"

But before he could complete his story, for he had tired the ears of every one by constantly alluding to the Swedish hero, the servants and Janet were on their way to the library; where all the inmates of the Castle were assembled, anxiously waiting the arrival of the carriage.

"I hear the sound of voices and of footsteps on the southern terrace," said Prudence Everard, rising from her seat.

"It is but your fancy, dearest," said Mistress Luttrell, "or the sentinels exchanging a few words as they near each other."

"No," said Prudence, "it is not the measured

tread of soldiers that I hear—hark ! they are at the postern door which leads to this room. A key turn in the lock : something has happened—to—do, dear Sir John, do go see what occurred.”

The colonel, who had been in deep conversation with Master Luttrell, rose ; but before he could gain the library door it was opened from within and Janet was ushered in by old Jefferies and Chipera ; the latter of whom announced her name, and told the colonel, that she had a message of importance to communicate to him, and that she had, therefore, ventured to bring her into his presence without applying for an order.

“ You did right, Basil. And now my good friend tell us freely what you have to say. To you I am indebted, I mistake not, that we are indebted for the valuable information brought to us by Giles Tudball to the colonel : “ Against the danger to the Prince we have already guarded.”

“ Alarm the garrison, sir, and get every man under arms—for I heard Master Julian say, that if they failed to secure the Prince’s person on the road or at Luxborough, he would make a dash for an attack on this Castle,” said Janet.

"He will find that these old walls will stand a long siege," said the colonel, smiling.

"But he means not to attack it openly;" said Janet, earnestly, "he spoke of some secret passage known only to himself and one other, by which he could introduce a body of men into the very keep."

"Know you of such a passage, sir?" said Prudence, addressing Master Luttrell.

"I have heard it said, that in the olden times there was an underground communication between the Castle and the priory of Dunster; but I gave no credence to the report."

"Pardon me, sir," said Basil Chipera, "but in my former office of parish clerk, I discovered an arched door-way in the vaults of the chancel, where the Mohuns and the Luttrells lie buried; I did not explore it, for the dampness of the air and a certain feeling of dread induced me to desist."

"And I, may it please you, sir," said Jefferies, "have heard the old folks say, that on Conygar Hill there is another passage which runs into the one leading from the priory, and that both communicate by a well-stair with the keep."

"I remember," said Master Luttrell, "hearing

my father speak of a well having been discovered in the old tower, which is called the keep: its having been boarded over to prevent access.

"What is best to be done? lose no time of you," said Prudence.

"Send Hamnet Hele, hither; but no, I myself and station a guard within the church, and another on Conygar," said the colonel.

"Hark!" said Prudence, "I hear the wheels, and the tread of horsemen:—they

"God be praised!" said Mistress Luttrell.

The alarm bell of the castle was rung, and a few minutes, the outer court was filled with men.

Master Luttrell and the ladies, followed by servants and Janet, rushed to the entrance to be ready to receive and welcome their visitors.

"Listen," said Prudence Everard, whose hearing seemed to be more than usually acute, "what means that sound as of a body of horsemen at full speed? The noise of wheels has I heard. What mean those shouts, and the clash of swords?—hark again! The report of fire—what can it mean?"

"Our enemies are upon them; I will follow

warn Colonel Wyndham," said Master Luttrell, "do you, dearest, lead Prudence and Lady Wyndham, within."

"I cannot go within—I shall choke if I be not in the open air. Oh God! hark to the shouts and the clang of weapons," said Prudence, as she leaned on Janet for support.

"I will be back in an instant," said Master Luttrell, releasing himself from his wife's grasp: "fear not; God will defend the right."

He rushed into the outer court, and found that the gates had been thrown open, and that the troops were sallying out on foot, for they had not had time to procure and mount their horses. Just as he passed under the arch of the gate, the report of a cannon was heard—the signal of alarm to their friends in the town. He hurried down the steep descent, and found his way as speedily as he could towards the scene of the struggle. All was dark when he left the Castle, but within a minute after the firing of the alarm-gun, lights appeared in all the windows, and he could see the carriage standing in the centre of the town, not far below the market-house, surrounded by a dense body of horsemen, engaged in a deadly struggle. Loud

shouts—"for the King!" "for the Parli
"a Bachell! a Bachell" rent the air, mingled
the clang of armour, the clashing of swords
the reports of pistols.

"Way there, way—for God's sake let
if you be Dunster-men and loyal subjects,"
a man who was carrying a female in his arms

"Hugh de Mohun!" said Master Luttrell

"My good and kind friend," said Hugh
way for me I entreat of you, for I am
exhausted. To the Castle—to the Castle

"But the Prince?" said Master Luttrell
tating how to act.

"Is safe—and in my charge," said Montagu
"on sir, on to the Castle."

Master Luttrell speedily cleared the way
in a few minutes, Hugh had deposited his
burden in the arms of Lady Wyndham's
tress Luttrell, and was sustaining the love
of Prudence Everard, who, in the excitement
of the moment, had thrown herself on his
breast.

Montagu put the young prince under the
of Master Luttrell, and was returning back
scene of the conflict to see to the safety

moiselle de Brevis's waiting-maid, but he met her at the hall-door in the care of Hurstmonçeau, who had fought his way through the throng, and succeeded in saving the girl, but not without being severely wounded by a sabre-cut in his shoulder.

"In, in, sir," said Montagu, "this way; you will find the Prince and his guardian in safety."

As they entered the room, Marguerite was just recovering from her faintness. Her first thought was of her charge, whom she embraced with the tenderness of a mother, and when she had released him from her arms, she stared wildly on the strange faces around her, and eagerly asked where she was, and how she came there.

"Be not alarmed, lady, you are within the walls of Dunster Castle, and among friends," said Mistress Luttrell, soothingly.

"But how came I here? who saved me from the uplifted sabre of the horsemen that pursued me?" asked Marguerite.

"You owe your second deliverance from death, to my young friend here, Hugh de Mohun," said Walter Montagu, taking him by the hand, and leading him towards her

"Father of heaven, the hand of Thy providence

is in this! De Mol
have borne the sec
Marguerite, as she
is too powerful to
Oh God—it is too
spare me!”

“Constance Lis
secret love!—I see

“It is as I sus

“but let us withd
themselves. Mist
York into your cha
safety of our friend

“I will with yo
still strike a blow

“You are wound
this gentleman to a
and I will shortly
have not forgotten
Montagu.

When the party
Mohun was still sup
mother on his left
upwards, and his e
titude for the unexp

But we must leave them for the present; and follow Montagu to the scene of the fight. The battle had been short; the victory decisive. The horsemen under Julian Bachell, hemmed in on all sides and overpowered by numbers, could not use their horses with good effect: they tried to dismount and fight on foot, but they were so closely jammed together that it was impossible: they fell one after another, many of them without being able to strike a blow, while their horses were stabbed or pistolled by the Dunster-men.

"Master Graveboys, or whatever it may please you to be called; come hither, and tell Master Quirke, whether there be life still left in this gentleman's body. I knew him not when I drove my knife so deeply into his side, or I might have withheld my hand, although he slew my mate, Will Bowering, and clove the thick skull of Alloway, the wrestler, as if it had been the head of a Christmas lamb," said Giles 'Tudball.

"Bring your torch this way," said Montagu, to a soldier, who was leaning on his sword and examining the body of a tall man that lay dead at his feet.

"I was merely taking a farewell glance at the

face of Roger Priver, to assure myself the sword had done its work well," said Alison; "he is as dead as his old master, John."

"Come hither, Pearson," said Montagu, "tell me if you can recognise this wounded man."

Alick held the torch close to the man's face, which was smeared with blood and black powder, and dropped the light as he fell on his knees, exclaiming "My young Master! I should find thee thus—slain as a rebel amongst rebels!"

"It is Julian Bashell," said Quirke, "I know him by his voice, as he rushed upon the carriage," and ordered Priver to seize the Prince and convey him to Ashley-Combe."

"His heart still beats, but faintly," said Montagu, after he had cut the strap of his breastplate and passed his hand beneath it; "carry him fully up to the Castle, whither I will follow as soon as I have ascertained the fate of Wyndham and Master Luttrell."

"They are both safe and unhurt," said Chipera, "and are doing their utmost to save the wounded from the Dunster-men, who are but more like devils than human beings."

"I will with you then at once," said Montagu, "for I shall be of more service in tending the wounded and relieving the anxiety of the ladies, than in helping their husbands to check the madness and fury of the soldiers."

A plank was procured, and Julian Bachell was carried up to the Castle by Giles and Quirke, who supported his head and shoulders, while Pearson and Chipera sustained the weight of his extremities. When they reached the castle, Montagu ordered them to convey him into the same room with Hurstmonceau, who was already undressed and impatiently awaiting the arrival of Montagu, and pleading hard for a draught of wine, with which old Jefferies refused to supply him, being fearful of producing inflammation.

"Drink water, sir—water," said the old man, "and if you be thirsty drink plentifully of it."

"Water be d—d," said the captain, "would'st have me poisoned with tadpoles?"

"Bind up his arm," said Montagu, "I will attend to his wants so soon as I shall have examined the wounds of Julian Bachell."

"Julian Bachell!" said Hugh de Mohun, as he entered the room, his eyes red with weep-

Brooke.

“The drops—quick, and throat, whilst I stimulate stuff,” said Montagu, as he from the curtain and ignited

Alick Pearson stood over watching the effects of these he saw him breathe convulsively he fell on his knees and lives!”

Julian raised himself on around him; Hugh stepped his hand, and whispered, “I trust you are not badly

“Hugh de Mohun! I am

me and her whom I loved; but I have made you both wretched—for the voice at St. Leonard's well and in the keep was mine. It was I who illtreated Jansen in hopes of depriving him of the drug that was to save your life; and I die happy, knowing that Prudence Everard will never marry a nameless, portionless bastard—ah! ah! ah!" screamed Julian, as he gazed on Hugh like a maniac.

"I am not portionless, nor am I a bastard," said Hugh, "I have found a mother this day, in her to whom the care of the young Duke of York was entrusted, and Prudence Everard will share with me the broad lands in France, that are mine by inheritance."

"Say it not, say it not—it never shall be—I—I will prevent it," shouted Julian, as he tried to spring from the bed. Montagu laid his hand upon his shoulder, and he fell backwards; a stream of blood gushed from his mouth; he shook his closed hand at Hugh de Mohun, and burying his face in the pillow, died without a groan.

CHAPTER XX.

ON the morning of the second day of the conflict in the town of Dunster, Julian Bachel was conveyed from the Castle, and interred in the church of Porlock. Hugh de Mohun and Pearson were the only mourners who attended the burial, which took place at an early hour in the day, and was, by the advice of Master Luttrell and Colonel Wyndham, conducted as privately as possible.

"Let us ride on, sir, to Ashley-Combe Park, at the close of the ceremony. "I would know what hath become of Master Robert Bachel, who, as it seems, urged my young master to his fate."

"You may rest satisfied when I tell you that the news of Julian's defeat and death induce

to quit this part of the country, and to fly to Lord Essex for protection," said Hugh. "Julian was the last of the Bachells, and Ashley-Combe now belongs to a collateral branch, who, as they are bitter puritans, will, doubtless, thank the preacher for having ridded them of him who stood between them and the fair domains which called him master. Let us back to the Castle."

Pearson reluctantly obeyed, and as he rode after Hugh, the tears streamed from his eyes, when he turned his head over his shoulder to gaze on the woods that hid from his view the house wherein he had spent the greater portion of his days. A turn in the road shut them out from his sight, and, dashing away the tears with his hand, he endeavoured to forget the past in thinking of the future.

A short hour's ride brought them to the Castle. Hugh gave his horse to Alick, and was about to seek the family in the library; but he was met by old Jefferies, who told him that Master Montagu wished to speak with him in private.

"I give you joy, De Mohun," said Walter, as he seized Hugh by the hand. "Thanks to our friend Basil Chipera, here, the papers entrusted to the care of Master Robert Snelling—or Dynes, as

we ought to call him, have been found. If the certified copy of the marriage of your p
illegal though it be, and here is—”

“Am I, then, a—” began Hugh.

“In the eye of the law—yes. Buckin
under a fictitious name, which you now
induced your mother to marry him, when sh
a mere child, and was left by her father,
Brevis, for the purpose of learning the l
language, in a convent near Hammersmith.
it appears, was harshly treated by the s
when her father returned to France, and
availed herself of an offer of marriage from
ingham, with whom she became acquainted
he visited Paris in the King’s company. He
most vilely towards her; for he led her to l
that he was a Roman Catholic, and that a m
with him would be binding. Our friend
monceau contrived to effect her escape fro
convent, knowing her only as Constance Lis
believing her to be one of the many whom
ingham loved *par amour*. The ceremon
performed, as these papers show, by one
Philippe, whom you saw in Oxford, in r
attendance on Gilbert Dynes. He knew

however, that under the name of Hugh de Mohun he was uniting the youthful Marguerite de Brevis to the already-married and Protestant Duke of Buckingham; and, I may add, to misery."

"My poor mother!" said Hugh, as he flung himself on a chair and wept bitterly.

"M. De Brevis," continued Walter Montagu, on his return to England after learning his daughter's escape from the convent, discovered the imposition that had been practised upon her. He laid the matter before the King; and Hurstmonceaux, on being questioned, confessed that Constance Lisle was under the protection of his master. Angry words ensued, and the matter would have been made public, had not the duke, upon the King's threatening him with his lasting displeasure given up the lady to her father, with a promise of providing for the child that was about to be born to her, and never revealing to it the name of its parents. Your mother made the same promise of secrecy; and, after your birth, left you to the care of an aged nurse, a domestic servant of the King's, and returned to France. To Robert Snelling—or Dynes—alone, was the secret of your birth entrusted. He had long been in the duke's confi-

dence, and undertook your education—which he was well qualified to fulfil—and promised not to make you acquainted with the name of your father until you came to the age of twenty years. Then, as these writings will shew, I intended to put you in possession of an estate in Normandy, but not to reveal to you the name of your mother, unless she herself sought you out and acknowledged you.”

“Which she would not have done—for I was ignorant—but her father and mine knew of her having a mother—had not Providence, in its mercy, made me its instrument in saving her life, Hugh.

“The ways of Providence are past finding out,” said Montagu, solemnly. “Your lot is cast upon fair ground: possessed of wealth and rank, Mademoiselle De Brevis, or Madame de Montagu, as she chooses henceforth to be called, is one of the richest subjects of King Louis—you may claim the hand of her whose heart has long been devoted to you. Leave this land, Hugh, where civil discord reigns, and where the dearest ties are disregarded, and in a foreign country seek the happiness that we cannot find at home, and requited love. For myself, I quit the Castle

day; and, having placed the Duke of York with his brother, the Prince of Wales—for such are his gracious father's commands—I go to resume my duties about the Queen's person. I bid you farewell, Hugh de Mohun, and may God have you in his keeping! Whether we may ever meet again is one of those apparent chances that Providence alone directs. Farewell, and God bless you!"

Hugh de Mohun and Walter Montagu parted, never to meet again. Faithful to his royal mistress, Montagu followed her fortunes, until a severe attack of fever carried him off, shortly before the execution of the royal martyr.

Merrily pealed the bells from the old tower of the church of Dunster, and loudly roared the cannon on its Castle walls, as a large party of ladies, attended by a gallant train, rode through the town towards Minehead. Groups of peasantry and tradesfolk cheered them as they passed, and many a joyful face was wetted by a tear which had its source in a mingled feeling of gladness and sorrow.

"See you, Mistress Bowering, how gallantly he

is dressed, and how proudly he rides by the side of his fair bride?" said dame Tudball, adding to the widow of poor Will.

"I cannot bear to look upon him, for he is the man who, unwittingly I allow, been the cause of my bereavement," said the widow.

"Think of the bag of gold he sent you to comfort you in your affliction," said dame Tudball.

"I think more of his kindness in visiting me in my affliction, and pouring words of comfort into my ears; but Hugh de Mohun, with all his pranks, was ever kind and considerate," said the widow.

"Well, do look out, and take your last look at him—for he goes to France in Master Jefferies's cutter, and we may never see him again," said dame Tudball.

The widow looked out of her casement. Hugh de Mohun lifted his hat from his brow and saluted her as he passed. He also said something to his bride which induced Prudence to bend her saddle to salute the dames.

"Now, a blessing be upon them both!" said the widow, as she applied her handkerchief to her eyes, and gave way to a hearty cry.

"Nay, do not weep; but view the gallant cavalcade," said dame Tudball. "See, there rides Sir John, and by his side good Master Thomas Luttrell, and behind them is a gay soldier-man, who sits so loosely in his saddle, that I should say that he had been indulging somewhat too freely over the wine-cup, did not the kerchief in which his arm is slung, prove that he is suffering from a wound; and see, as I live, there is my good-for-nought! drunk; I vow he is drunk, and leans on old Robin Quirke for support, who is well-nigh as drunk as himself."

"With joy, doubtless," said the widow.

"With wine, woman, with wine, I tell you; and there is Basil Chipera, shouting like a madman, and old Jefferies, the butler, keeping him company in spite of his years. And, look you, who think you is she that rides so gaily beside her gallant, who is as fine as a jay-pie after moulting?" asked the dame rather spitefully.

"Nay, I cannot tell, they be strangers to me," said the widow.

"Strangers indeed! who should they be but Alick Pearson and Miss Janet Hodge, late of

Ashley-Combe Lodge. They should be mourning, I think, an they had any rest their late master," said dame Tudball.

"But they were married this morning, ter Richard Luckes ells me, and it is an to be wedded in black," said the widow mournfully at her own sables.

"Let us to the quay and see the last o said the dame, as she dragged the resisting from the casement and hurried her d stairs.

They reached the pier just as the party mounted. Hugh de Mohun assisted his and his wife on board the *St. David*, an Pearson, with Janet on one arm, and the woman of his mistress on the other, follow the warps were cast off, the gallant little b upon the waves, impelled by a favourin and amidst the shouts of some and the others, bore Hugh de Mohun from the s England for ever.

Something remains to be said of the 1 attended those who have played their part our little drama.

Robert Quirke died at a good old age, after he had seen his alms-houses endowed and inhabited by aged paupers, and finding himself dull in his lonely home, engaged the services of the widow Bowering to wait upon him, and talk over old times with him. The widow, long after his death, and when she was in her dotage would hint at certain visits that were paid them in the dead of the night by an old woman clad in a grey cloak, and who screamed so like a sea-mew, that she believed her to be old mother Lecky of whom her poor departed Will, used to stand in so much dread.

Giles Tudball, shortly after his wife's death, having no occasion to bestow his gains, as he had intended to do, on Hugh de Mohun, sold his premises and his good ship the Blossom of Minehead, and turned all his other worldly goods into money, which he loyally paid into the King's exchequer, and was rewarded for his zeal and liberality, by being appointed a special messenger to the court, an office that he would have discharged admirably from his knowledge of the country, had he not been discovered in Essex's army by Master Robert Browne, and shot as a spy.

Master Jenkins was never seen at Dunster after he quitted it with Hugh de Moh. He bought a little estate near to the town of Minehead, for which he paid in French gold. The Squire, however, continued to ply to Minehead, under the command of Mabel's husband.

Old Jefferies died during the siege of Dunster Castle by Colonel Blake, killed, as some say, by the sudden announcement of its surrender, which was made to him by Basil Chipera.

As to Basil himself, he continued to plant myrtles, and train his lemon-tree on the wall, bestowing some of his leisure moments on Prynne, who was imprisoned in the castle. He assisted him in collecting together the charmuniments of the Luttrells, and the Mohr's death called upon him and he was borne to the church in which he had officiated as parish priest.

Hurstmonceaux, to his own surprise, and to the amazement of his friends, died sober. He was taken into the hands of the Puritans, who feasted him to the full for three days, in order to extort from him an important secret. The plan failed. The Captain drank deeply, and abused the re-

he drank; but rigidly refused to reply to any question that was put to him. Vexed at their ill success, they tried a different system—limited him to bread and fair water for another three days. The captain refused to taste the good things provided for him: d—d them more bitterly than before; and as he submitted his neck to the noose, he spat at them, and, laying great emphasis on the word, called them—Rechabites!

Dunster Castle, in its renovated state, is an object of interest to all tourists. The kindness, and affability of the gentleman who now owns it—a direct descendant of the Master Thomas Luttrell, whose name appears in these pages—ensure easy access to all who wish to inspect it.

END OF VOL. III.

POSTSCRIPTUM.

COURTEOUS READER,

MY tale has come to an end more abruptly than I had intended it should. I was compelled, however, to bring it to a speedy conclusion, lest other hands should have to finish what mine had begun.

Picture to yourself a healthy, middle-aged gentleman, with a family of—I am afraid to say many—motherless children, being compelled by authority, to quit the bracing air of the Berks Downs, and take up his abode in a cottage erected on a half-redeemed snipe-bog, in the fens of Essex; migrating, as it were, from the dry, pure regions about Hampstead, to the coast of Holland. Such was my case.

Well; although two of my little one

“down with the *ager*” and my housekeeper, taking quinine in such copious doses, that she wished she had friends in Peru to supply her with the raw material, I bore up against it manfully. I was never without a spade or a pen in my hand, and got on—I was about to say, swimmingly; but the water of the snipe bog is so thick, that even frogs are never seen to take a cold-bath in it—so substitute any other adverb you may please for it.

This lasted until my children went to their schools, and I was left *alone*; then came a succession of letters, each conveying the tidings of the death of some literary friend. I need not name them. My spirits sunk, my energies deserted me, and in the stillness of night I asked myself “who is to be the next victim?” I thought of my children depending on my exertions alone for maintenance, and fancied that the air I breathed was surcharged with those hideous acquatic monsters that are revealed to us by the powers of the oxygen microscope. I could not rid myself of the idea that my lungs were filled with them, and that every successive inspiration must prove my death by suffocation. Morning came,

and I set myself down to complete this work, which I feel assured will prove work unless Providence, in its mercy, raise up a friend *able* as well as *willing* to remove from a spot too damp even for the lung Newfoundland dog. You may smile at the idea of a madman, but it is the fact; the faithful companion of my walking hours during the morning of an inflamed throat, of precisely the same nature as that from which his master is suffering.

Well; I hastened to complete my tale, to the printer, and have been an invalid ever since. I write not thus to "disarm the critic" simply to engage your sympathy, COUNTRY READER, and I throw myself back on my sickness, assuring you that

I am your very humble servant

THE AUTHOR.

Oct. 17th, 1845.



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